CALIBER
COMICS
ISSUE 50
$6.95 USA $9.75 CAN
96
PAGES
NEGATIVE
BURN
EDVIN BIUKOVIĆ
BRIAN BOLLAND
RICHARD CASE
GUY DAVIS
GREG DiGENTI
NEIL GAIMAN
MICHAEL GAYDOS
JON HAWARD
PHILLIP HESTER
PAUL JENKINS
DAVE JOHNSON
NABIEL KANAN
MARK KNEECE
JIM KRUEGER
DARKO MACAN
SCOTT McDANIEL
SCOTT MORSE
JAMES A. OWEN
MIKE PERKINS
JOE PRUETT
GREG SAGE
GALEN SHOWMAN
DURWIN TALON
SHANNON WHEELER
MIKE WIERINGO
JIM WOODYARD

Joe Pruett / Editor
VOLUME ONE • NUMBER 50

2 THE FOOTSOLDIERS
written by Jim Krueger
illustrated by Phillip Hester

10 MR. MAMOULIAN
written and illustrated by Brian Bolland

11 THE LAST TEMPTATION:
*A STARCHILD VIGNETTE*
written and illustrated by James A. Owen

17 ANNIE AMMO
written and illustrated by Richard Case

22 APRIL NIGHTMARES
written and illustrated by Mike Wieringo

26 I WON'T FORGET YOU
written by Paul Jenkins
illustrated by Michael Gaydos

33 BLACKOUT
written and illustrated by Nabiel Kanan

39 STORMY
written by Greg Sage
illustrated by Galen Showman

40 THE OLD WARLOCK'S REVERIE:
*A PANTOUM*
written by Neil Gaiman
illustrated by Guy Davis

42 BONESHAKER: THE FIX
written and illustrated by Phillip Hester
inked by Jim Woodyard

Desperado Studios

calcomic@aol.com

CHECK OUT OUR
WEB SITE
www.caliber comics.com

Staff Letterer
Roxanne Starr

Production Manager
Nathan Pride

British Liaison
Malcolm Bourne

Managing Editor
James Pruett

Administrator
Nancy Durand

Graphics Coordinator
Joe Martin

Special Projects Editor
Tim Parsons

Publisher
Gary Reed

NEGATIVE BURN. Vol. 1-no. 50. Published by Caliber Comics, 225 N. Sheldon Road, Plymouth, MI 48170. NEGATIVE BURN ™ and ©1997 by Charles Moore, James Pruett and Joe Pruett. THE FOOT SOLDIERS © and ™1997 Jim Krueger. MR. MAMOULIAN ©1997 Brian Bolland. STARCHILD ©1997 James A. Owen. ANNIE AMMO ©1997 Richard Case. APRIL NIGHTMARES ©1997 Mike Wieringo. I WON'T FORGET YOU ©1997 Paul Jenkins, Art ©1997 Michael Gaydos. BLACKOUT ©1997 Nabiel Kanan. STORMY ©1997 Galen Showman. THE OLD WARLOCK'S REVERIE ©1997 Neil Gaiman, Art ©1997 Guy Davis. BONESHAKER ©1997 Phillip Hester. THE PHALANXES OF THE HOUSE ORDER ©1997 Darko Macan, Art ©1997 Edvin Biukovic. ALL ROBOT STYLE ©1997 Scott Morse. CHICKS, HOT RODS AND KUDZU ©1997 Dave Johnson. KILROY IS HERE ©1997 Joe Pruett, Art ©1997 by Jon Haward. A FEW OF THE MANY MASKS I WEAR ©1997 Greg DiGenti. THE SURVIVORS ©1997 Mark Kneece, Art ©1997 Derwin Talon. TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN ©1997 Shannon Wheeler. Cover art ©1997 Scott McDaniel. Back cover art ©1997 Mike Perkins. Any similarity without satirical purpose to a person, name, character, or institution is a coincidence. Printed in Canada.

64 THE PHALANXES OF THE HOUSE ORDER
written by Darko Macan
illustrated by Edvin Biukovic

65 ALL ROBOT STYLE
written and illustrated by Scott Morse

71 CHICKS, HOT RODS AND KUDZU
written and illustrated by Dave Johnson

76 KILROY IS HERE
written by Joe Pruett
illustrated by Jon Haward

83 A FEW OF THE MANY MASKS I WEAR...
written and illustrated by Greg DiGenti

84 THE SURVIVORS
written by Mark Kneece
illustrated by Durwin Talon

91 TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN
written and illustrated by Shannon Wheeler

Cover Art
by Scott McDaniel

Back Cover Art
by Mike Perkins

Thanks for a great 50 issues!

Look for a special Negative Burn in 1998!

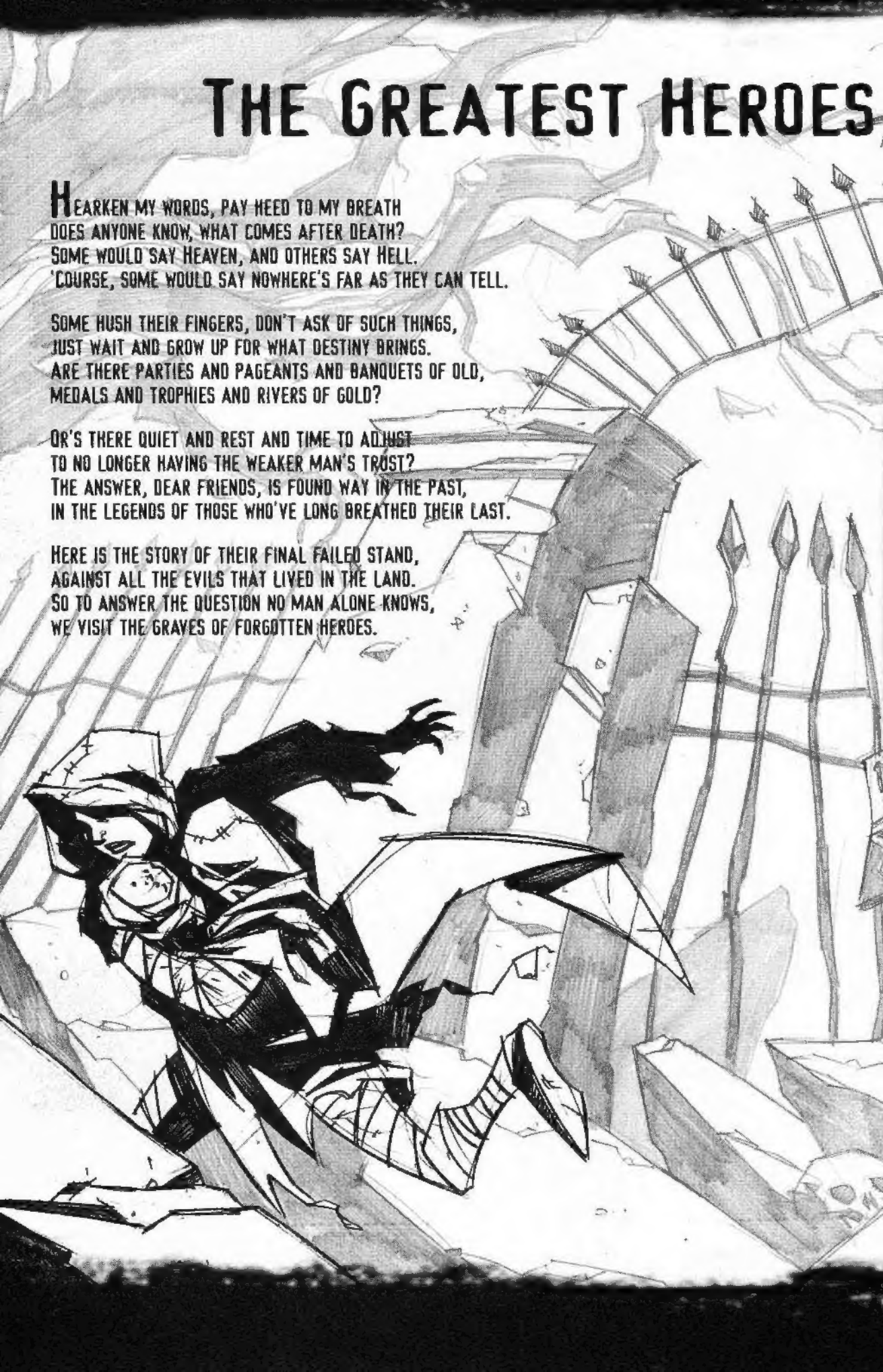
# The Greatest Heroes

Hearken my words, pay heed to my breath
does anyone know, what comes after death?
Some would say Heaven, and others say Hell.
'Course, some would say nowhere's far as they can tell.

Some hush their fingers, don't ask of such things,
just wait and grow up for what destiny brings.
Are there parties and pageants and banquets of old,
medals and trophies and rivers of gold?

Or's there quiet and rest and time to adjust
to no longer having the weaker man's trust?
The answer, dear friends, is found way in the past,
in the legends of those who've long breathed their last.

Here is the story of their final failed stand,
against all the evils that lived in the land.
So to answer the question no man alone knows,
we visit the graves of forgotten heroes.



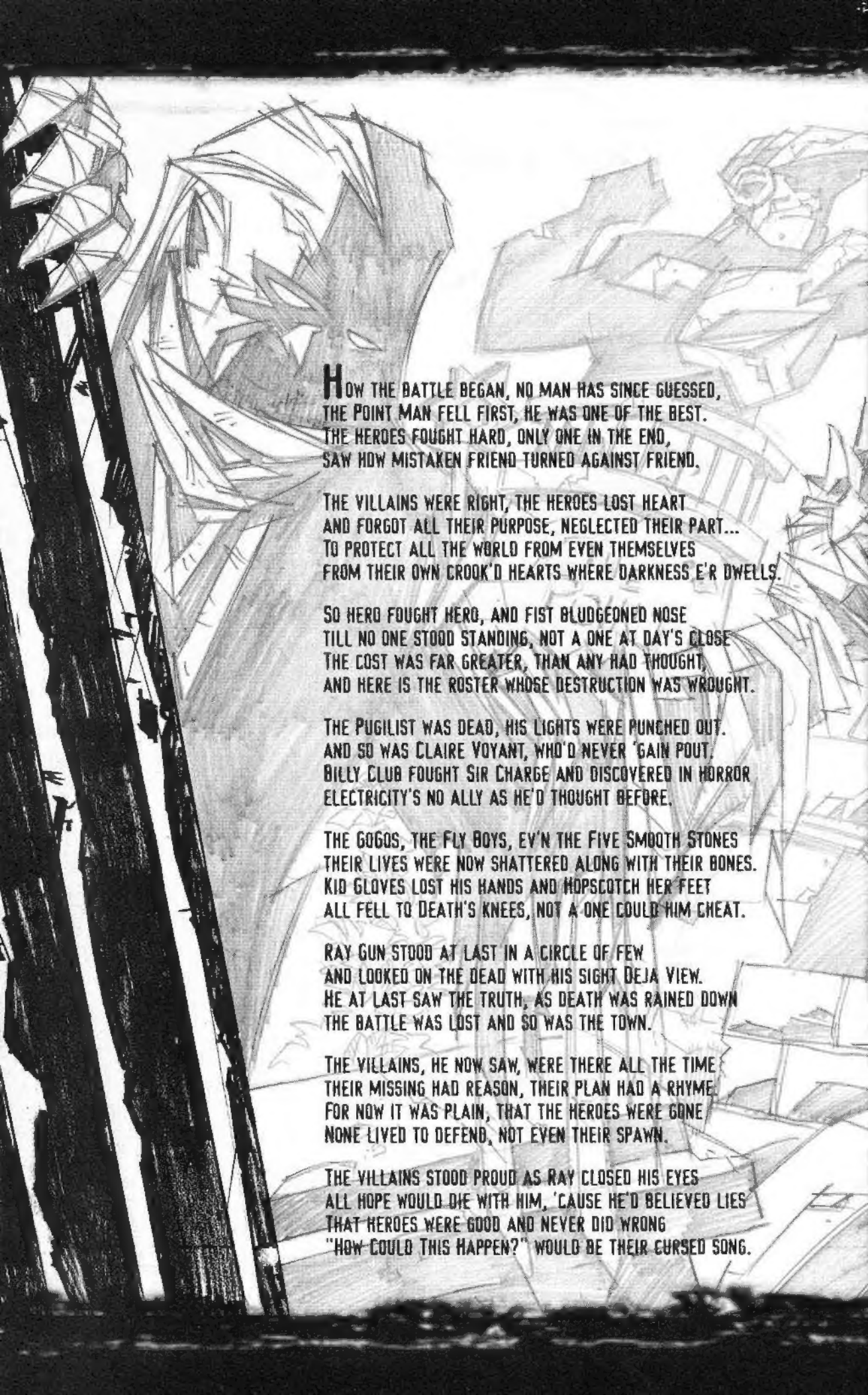
# WHO EVER DIED

AND WHY, YOU MAY ASK ARE THEY CHEATED THIS WAY,
WHY LOST AND NEGLECTED, IGNORED IN DISMAY?
'TIS THE NATURE OF TIME, TO WEIGH ITS LEGENDS,
TO JUDGE ALL THEIR DEEDS AND NOT MAKE AMENDS.

AND THOUGH ALL THEIR LIVES, THEY FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT,
'TWAS IN THEIR DEATHS, WE AT LAST SAW THEIR SPITE.
THE VILLAINS WERE GONE, OR SO IT WAS THOUGHT,
PEACE HAD BEEN EARNED, A RESPITE BEEN BOUGHT.

IN TRUTH ONE SO CLEVER, HAD MADE A DARK PACT
TO TRICK ALL THOSE HEROES AND SHOW WHAT THEY LACKED.
HIS PLAN WAS TO GIVE NOT A THING TO DEFEND,
NOT A DEATH TO AVENGE, NOT A CRIME TO ATTEND.

FOR THEN THIS ONE KNEW THAT WITH NOTHING TO FIGHT,
THE HEROES'D GROW RESTLESS NOT STRETCHING THEIR MIGHT.
SO ALL OF THE VILE AND DESPICABLE TOO,
HID IN THE SHADOWS TILL TARNISHED PRIDE GREW.



How the battle began, no man has since guessed,
The Point Man fell first, he was one of the best.
The heroes fought hard, only one in the end,
saw how mistaken friend turned against friend.

The villains were right, the heroes lost heart
and forgot all their purpose, neglected their part...
To protect all the world from even themselves
from their own crook'd hearts where darkness e'r dwells.

So hero fought hero, and fist bludgeoned nose
till no one stood standing, not a one at day's close
The cost was far greater, than any had thought,
and here is the roster whose destruction was wrought.

The Pugilist was dead, his lights were punched out.
and so was Claire Voyant, who'd never 'gain pout.
Billy Club fought Sir Charge and discovered in horror
electricity's no ally as he'd thought before.

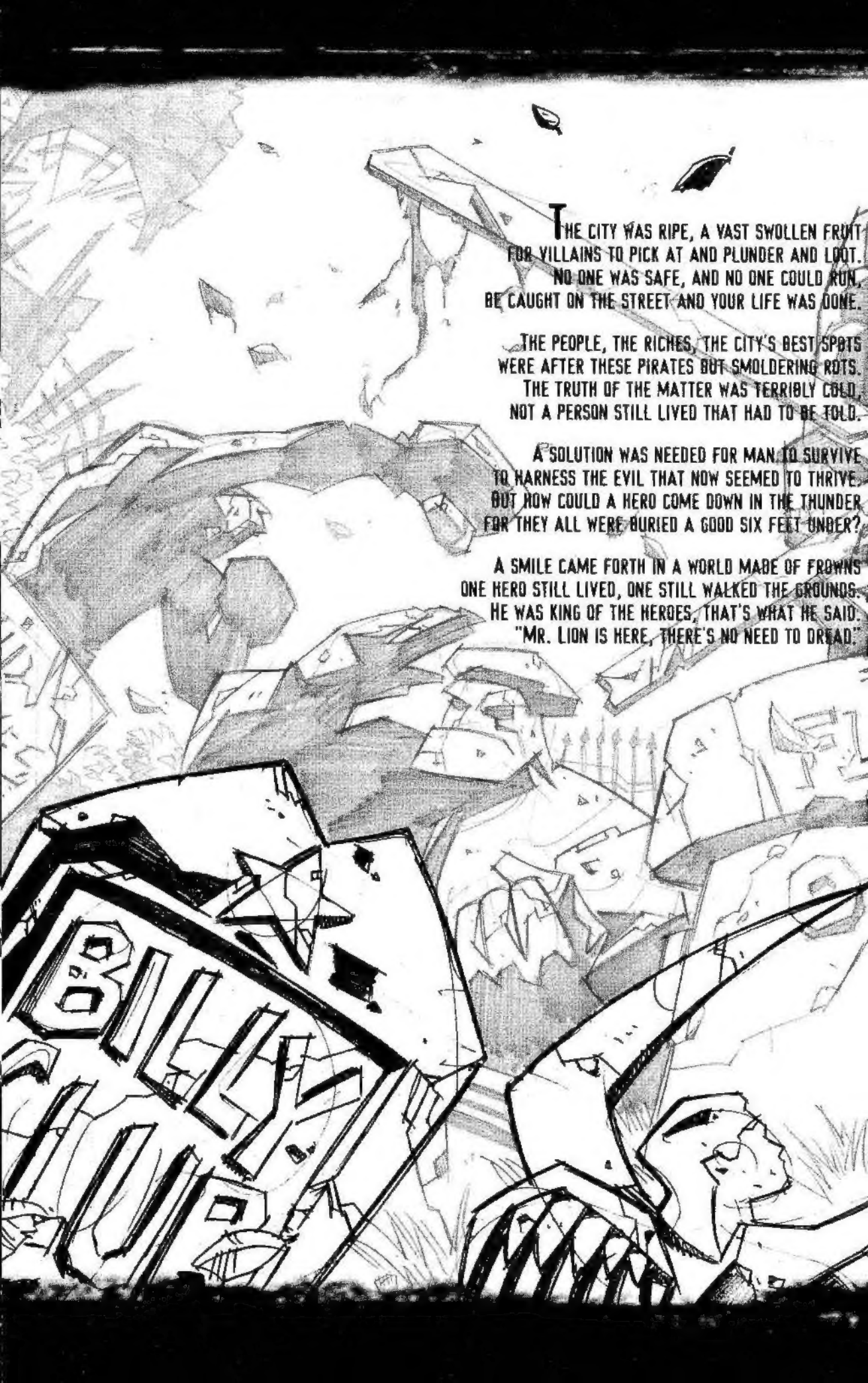
The GoGos, the Fly Boys, ev'n the Five Smooth Stones
their lives were now shattered along with their bones.
Kid Gloves lost his hands and Hopscotch her feet
all fell to Death's knees, not a one could him cheat.

Ray Gun stood at last in a circle of few
and looked on the dead with his sight Deja View.
He at last saw the truth, as death was rained down
the battle was lost and so was the town.

The villains, he now saw, were there all the time
their missing had reason, their plan had a rhyme.
For now it was plain, that the heroes were gone
none lived to defend, not even their spawn.

The villains stood proud as Ray closed his eyes
all hope would die with him, 'cause he'd believed lies
That heroes were good and never did wrong
"How Could This Happen?" would be their cursed song.

CLAIRE
6
UGILIST


THE CITY WAS RIPE, A VAST SWOLLEN FRUIT
FOR VILLAINS TO PICK AT AND PLUNDER AND LOOT.
NO ONE WAS SAFE, AND NO ONE COULD RUN,
BE CAUGHT ON THE STREET AND YOUR LIFE WAS DONE.
THE PEOPLE, THE RICHES, THE CITY'S BEST SPOTS
WERE AFTER THESE PIRATES BUT SMOLDERING ROTS.
THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER WAS TERRIBLY COLD,
NOT A PERSON STILL LIVED THAT HAD TO BE TOLD.
A SOLUTION WAS NEEDED FOR MAN TO SURVIVE
TO HARNESS THE EVIL THAT NOW SEEMED TO THRIVE.
BUT HOW COULD A HERO COME DOWN IN THE THUNDER
FOR THEY ALL WERE BURIED A GOOD SIX FEET UNDER?
A SMILE CAME FORTH IN A WORLD MADE OF FROWNS
ONE HERO STILL LIVED, ONE STILL WALKED THE GROUNDS.
HE WAS KING OF THE HEROES, THAT'S WHAT HE SAID.
"MR. LION IS HERE, THERE'S NO NEED TO DREAD."

"MR. LION?" THEY ASKED, "WHAT CAN YOU DO?"
HE ENCIRCLED THEIR PARTY AND THEN SPOKE HIS VIEW.
LAY DOWN ALL YOUR TREASURES AND BOW BEFORE ME
I'LL BRING BACK YOUR GOTHAM TO ALL ITS GLORY.
"WHAT CAN WE LOSE?" WAS THEIR BEST ARGUEMENT
AND THAT WAS THE REASON THEIR MONEY WAS SPENT.
TO CREATE A NEW ARMY OF HEROES TO FIGHT
ALL THOSE WHO'D MADE LIFE A PERPETUAL NIGHT.
AND SO, UNDER LION, WAS THE D.C.T. CRAFTED
A CAUSE FOR NOW WHICH, THE BEST MEN WERE DRAFTED.
A TASKFORCE WHICH WOULD BE THE ONLY DEFENSE
AGAINST ALL THOSE MISCREANTS WHO'D TAKEN OFFENSE.
THE BATTLE WAS QUICK, THE LOSSES WERE GREAT
BUT IN THE END, 'TWAS AT LAST, VILLAINS' FATE...
TO FALL AT THE HANDS OF THEIR ONCE GREAT ALLY
TO THINK THAT THEY'D WON, BUT ONLY THEN DIE.

MR. LION CROUCHED THERE WITH HIS CHESHIRE SMILE
AND KNEW ALL WAS HIS 'CAUSE HE'D WAITED A WHILE.
THE CITY IN PIECES WOULD THEN BE REBUILT
BY ONE WHO HAD NEVER FELT ANY GUILT.

FOR THIS WAS HIS PLAN, NOW WITH NONE TO OPPOSE
NOT HERO, NOT VILLAIN, AND NOBODY KNOWS.
THE CITY WOULD BE HIS OWN VERSION OF HELL
AND IN TIME, D.C.T. WOULD BECOME B.T.L.

THE BEETLE, THE SYMBOL OF ALL REBIRTH,
THE DECEIT, THE BLOOD SPILLED ON CURSED EARTH.
THESE IMAGES TELL OF BEGINNING, NOT END,
FOR THERE WERE SOME VILLAINS LION COULD NOT BEND.

AND SO SHORTLY AFTER THE DAMAGE WAS DONE,
MR. LION, IT SEEMED, HAD JUST UP AND RUN,
BUT LOOK TO THE GRAVESTONE MARKED JUST FOR HE
AND YOU'LL SOON DISCOVER, HE'S NO LONGER FREE.

WHICH VILLAIN WAS IT THAT TRAPPED HIM HERE?
WHICH VILLAIN WAS THERE THAT HAD NO FEAR?
THE ANSWER, IT SEEMS, IS LOST TO TIME
VAULTED IN MARBLE, SHACKLED IN LIME.

SO FROM THAT DAY ON, THE B.T.L. RULED
ALL HOPE WAS FORGOTTEN, ITS FIRES NOT FUELED.
BUT WHAT OF THE HEROES, WHAT OF THEIR LOST DEEDS?
FEAR NOT, GENTLE SOULS, FOR THEIR DEATHS BECAME SEEDS.

SEEDS TO BE BURIED IN DIRT AND IN MUD
SEEDS TO BE NURTURED BY BONE AND BLOOD
SEEDS TO BE SPROUTED AND SPREAD LIKE FIRE
SEEDS TO BE PLANTED FOR A PURPOSE MUCH HIGHER

AND SO IT WOULD BE, IN THIS ASH AND IN SOOT
THANK GOD FOR THE HEROES, FOR THEIR DEATHS TOOK ROOT.
THEIR COSTUMES ARE GONE AND SO ARE THEIR HUES
BUT THE FOOT SOLDIERS ARE HERE, TO FILL ALL THEIR SHOES.

# THE FOOT SOLDIERS

ANOTHER QUALITY READING
EXPERIENCE FROM COMPASS STUDIOS

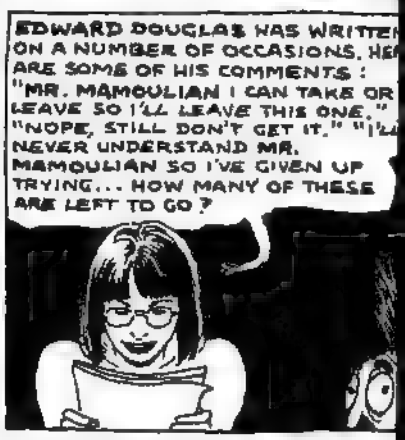
TM & © 1997 JIM KRUEGER. ALL RIGHTS ARE HIS.

# MR. MAMOULIAN
# YOUR LETTERS

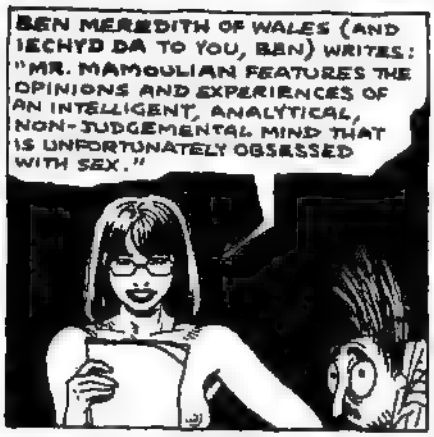
24.9.97 BOLLAND 5

AT THIS POINT WE WANTED TO TAKE SOME TIME TO RESPOND TO A FEW OF THE LETTERS YOU THE READERS HAVE SENT OVER THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS.

OLAV BEEMER OF THE NETHERLANDS HAS THIS TO SAY: "AS ALWAYS WITH MR. MAMOULIAN THE INSTALMENTS ARE EITHER FUNNY OR INCOMPREHENSIBLE. THIS ONE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY THE LATTER."


EDWARD DOUGLAS HAS WRITTE ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS. HE ARE SOME OF HIS COMMENTS: "MR. MAMOULIAN I CAN TAKE OR LEAVE SO I'LL LEAVE THIS ONE." "NOPE, STILL DON'T GET IT." "I'L NEVER UNDERSTAND MR. MAMOULIAN SO I'VE GIVEN UP TRYING... HOW MANY OF THESE ARE LEFT TO GO?

LATER HE SAYS "AT LAST THE TRUTH WAS THE FUNNIEST STRIP IN THE SERIES SO FAR. I PREFERED THIS TO ANY OTHER CHAPTER IN THE STORY OF THAT PATHETIC LOSER, MR. MAMOULIAN."
OUCH!
THAT WAS HARSH.


BEN MEREDITH OF WALES (AND IECHYD DA TO YOU, BEN) WRITES: "MR. MAMOULIAN FEATURES THE OPINIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF AN INTELLIGENT, ANALYTICAL, NON-JUDGEMENTAL MIND THAT IS UNFORTUNATELY OBSESSED WITH SEX."

ANDREW FORD SAYS: "I JUST DIDN'T GET IT. IT READ WELL ALL THE WAY THROUGH... UNTIL THE END, THAT IS IT JUST KINDA DIED, UNLIKE THE USUAL BANG POW ENDING I'M USED TO."

COPPERVALE PRESS
*presents*

# THE LAST TEMPTATION

# OF LITTLE NEIL

*written and illustrated by*
JAMES OWEN

*special guest*
ALICE COOPER

*with apologies to*
AUTHOR UNKNOWN

*a*
NEGATIVE BURN
*production*

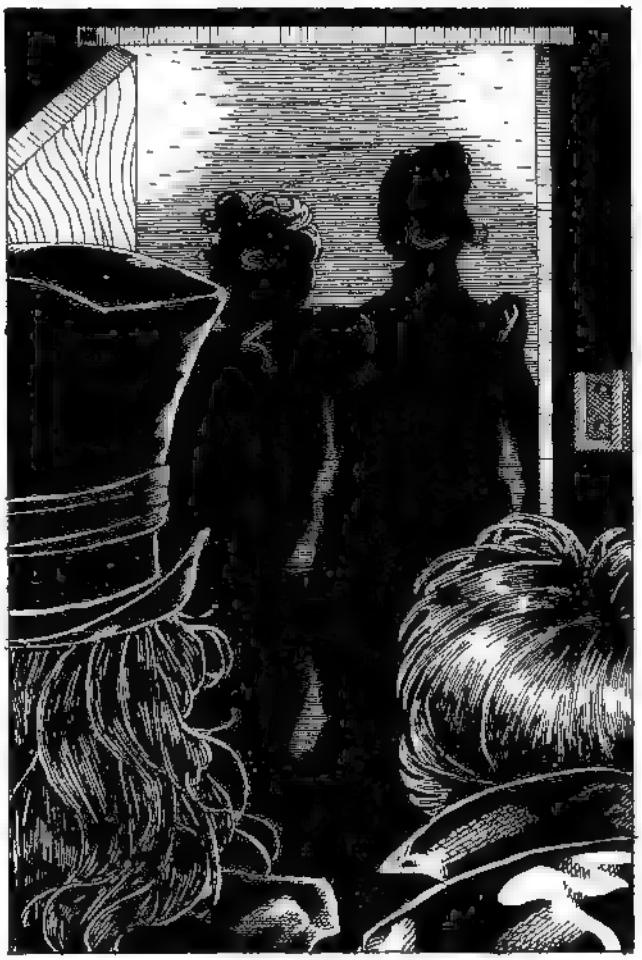
*a*
STARCHILD
*vignette*

It fell about the Martinmas time,
And a gay time it was then,
That our Gaiman had deadlines to meet,
And he writ for them w' a friend.

The wind blew cauld frae east and north
And blew intil the floor;
Quoth our Gaiman to the music man,
"Get up and bar the door."

"My hand is at my fender guitar,
Gaiman, as you may see;
And it shou'lda be barr'd this hunder Year
It's ne'er be barr'd by me."

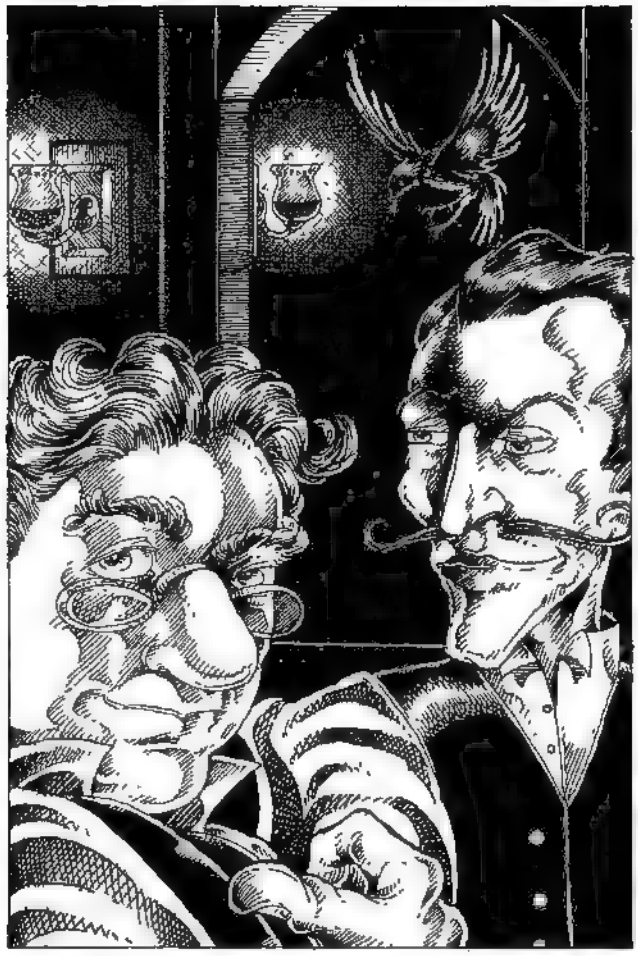
They made a paction 'tween them twa,
They made it firm and sure,
That the first word whaever spak,
Should rise and bar the door.



Than by there came twa gentlemen,
At twelve o'clock at night,
Whan they can see na ither house,
And at the door they light.

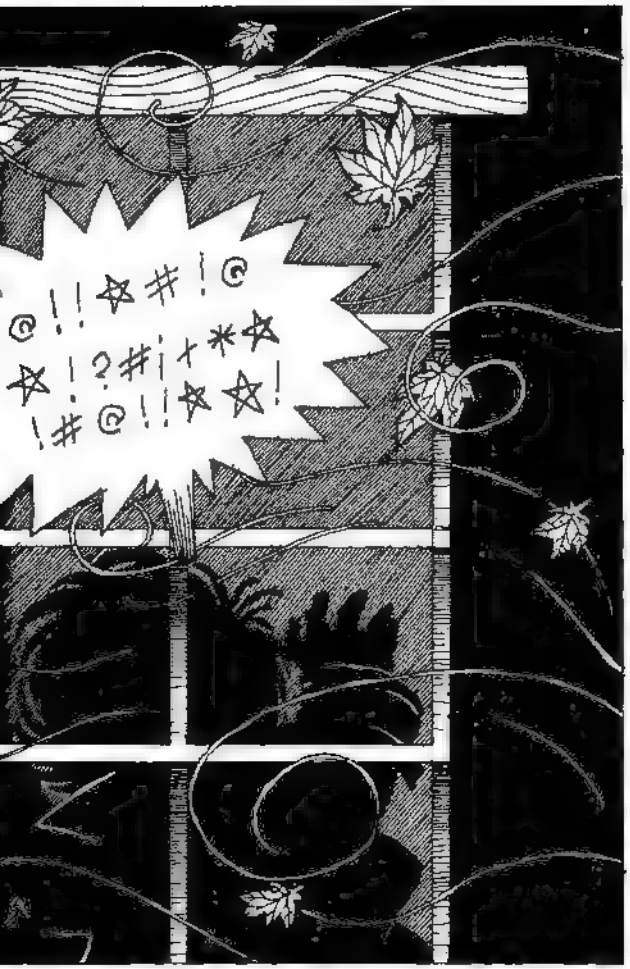
"Now whether is this a poet's house,
Or rather, that of a boor?"
But ne'er a word wad ane o' them speak,
For barring of the door.

And first they read the short stories,
Every word twas in the hovel;
Muckle, thought the Gaiman to himself,
I'd better get out my novel.



Then ane unto the ither said,
"Here, man," He said w' a leer,
"You contract the wee auld writer,
And I'll sign the balladeer."

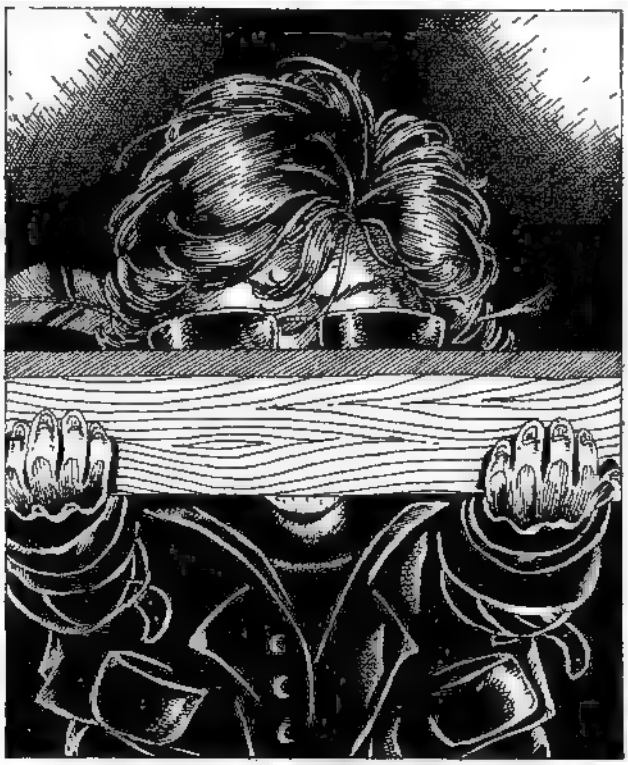
"But there's no money in the account,
We've nae a dime to pay the rector."
Disdain'd ane said "We'll buy the one
With drink,
The other we'll make a director."




O up then started our Gaiman,
An angry wee lad was he;
"Ye'll gaen liquor to the man w' paint
'Round his een,
But ye'll offer none to me?"

O up then started the musician,
Gied three skips on the floor;
"Gaiman, ye've spak the formost word;
Get up and bar the door!"

It fell to Little Neil to up and bar the
Door,
    The twa strangers banish'd as if in a
    Stupor;
An' he spake w' pen once more in hand'
    "The next knock is all yours,
    Cooper."



# THE END

MOTHERS OF THE WORLD BEWARE,
THE BLACK MARKET WANTS YOUR BABIES!
EVER SINCE THE WORLD-WIDE IMPOTENCE
IMPLOSION OF '03, INFANTS AND TODDLERS
HAVE BEEN DISAPPEARING AT AN ALARMING RATE.

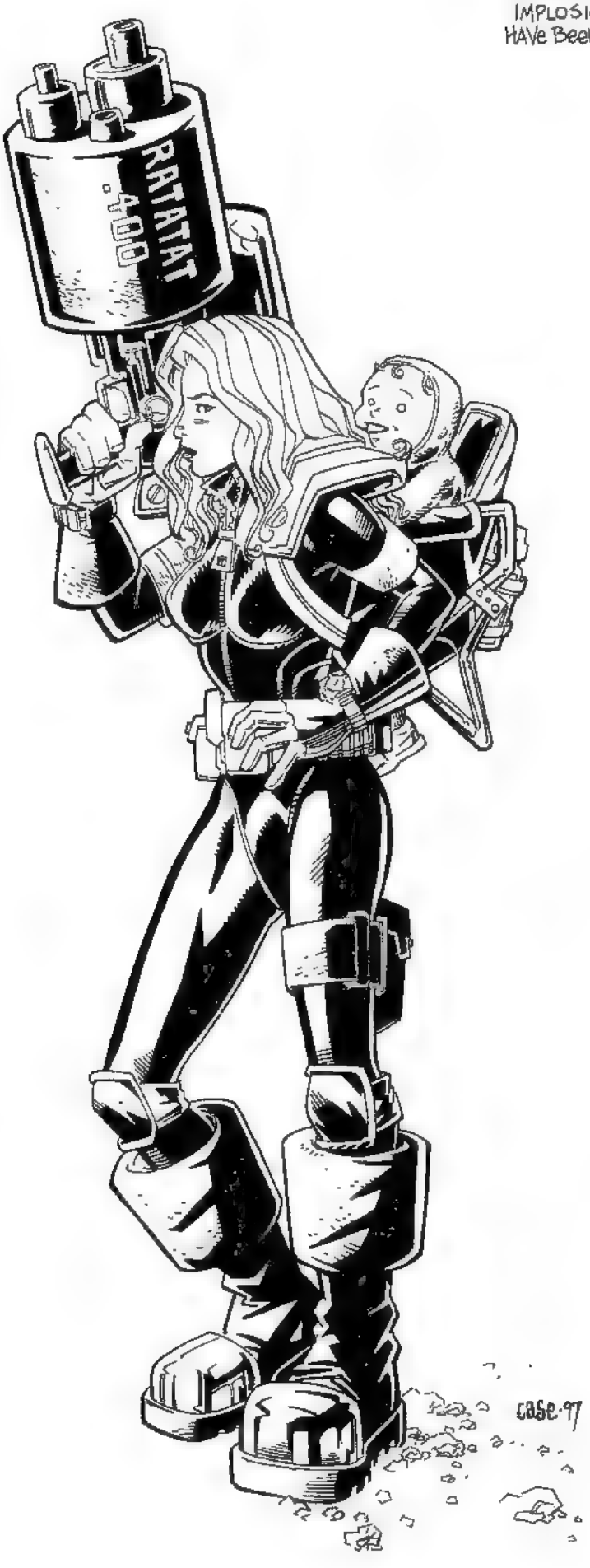
WHAT TO DO?!

WHO CAN HELP?!

C'MON, YOU KNOW THE ANSWER.

IT'S...

# ANNIE AMMO



THE DAY STARTED OFF PROMISING ENOUGH...
TOOK AMY TO THE PLAYGROUND WHERE SHE SLID DOWN THE SLIDE FOR THE FIRST TIME. POPPED INTO FREEZE QUEEN FOR A SCOOP OF PISTACHIO CHOCO-CHIP. AND SHE EVEN BEHAVED WHILE I RAN SOME ERRANDS...
IT WAS ALL GOOD.
AND THEN SOME FREAK BY THE NAME OF (GET THIS) TOASTMASTER MAX CAME ALONG AND SNATCHED SUSIE SLOTZKY, AGE 2, FROM RIGHT OUT OF HER MOTHER'S ARMS.
RUINED THE WHOLE DAY.
BRAKA TOOM .750
So NOW I'M HERE BELOW THE STREETS LOOKING FOR AN OVERGROWN TOASTER WHO'S GONE ALL MATERNAL WHILE MY DAUGHTER'S SPOON-FED OLD BARNEY RERUNS BACK AT THE STATION...
BUT AT LEAST I KNOW WHERE SHE IS.
No. 18



©RICHARD CASE 1997

HELLO! WHO'S THIS?
WHAT'S YOUR NAME, SWEETIE?
SOMEBODY'S MISSING YOU RIGHT NOW I BET...
AAAAAAAAAA
No. 23
OH NO!
IF THAT BASTARD'S HURT HER, I'LL...
THANK GOD, SHE LOOKS UNHURT...

DON'T WORRY SWEETIE, I'M HERE TO TAKE YOU HOME!
LOOK! HERE'S SOMEBODY WHO'S BEEN MISSING YOU!
dolly..?
Spang
OW!
ANNIE AMMO...
YOU'RE TOAST!
CRISPY, NOT BURNT...
JUST THE WAY I LIKE THEM!
SON OF A BITCH!

KLANG
KISS MY BOOTIE, ASSWIPE!
bootie..?
C'MON C'MON...
GOT IT!
HAND GRENAD
CRAM!
GET BACK SUSIE!
!!
BAKOOM!
uff..!
SQUAAAWKK!!
IT'S OVER SUSIE.
AND SO...
THANKS, ANNIE AMMO!
ANOTHER MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.

UM... HI. I'M ON MY WAY TO GRANNIE'S HOUSE. MAY I PASS BY, PLEASE?
OHH-- I DON'T THINK I CAN DO THAT....
April NIGHTMARES
BY MIKE WIERINGO
© MIKE WIERINGO

...SEE, I'M 'BOUT TO MAKE YOU MY LUNCH!!
I HAVE A BETTER IDEA...
WHY DON'T YOU CHEW ON...

...THIS!
URK..!!
?
YOU TURNED ME INTO...
...A MOUSE!!?!
RRRRR...!
OBOY...!

AAAAAA!!
ZING!
PLEASE... I'M SORRY! DON'T HURT ME... I'LL NEVER BOTHER YOU AGAIN! NOT THAT I COULD NOW.... GROAN...!
C'MON, SALEM. HE MUST'VE THOUGHT HE WAS MESSING WITH LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD OR SOMETHING...!
THE END*
SPECIAL THANKS TO MY BUDDY TODD DEZAGO!

I WON'T FORGET YOU
THIS HAPPENED TO ME RECENTLY, WHEN I WAS VISITING WAYNO – A CARTOONIST FRIEND OF MINE WHO LIVES IN PITTSBURGH...
WE'D STOPPED AT A HUGE BOOKSTORE, HIDING FROM THE RAIN. WHILE WAYNO BROWSED THE FUNNY BOOKS, I TRAIPSED DOWN TO THE LOWER LEVEL.
THERE WAS AN HORRIFIC DISPLAY OF HOLOCAUST LITERATURE DOWN THERE – LITERALLY THOUSANDS OF IMAGES OF BRUTALITY AND SUFFERING ON STARCHED, WHITE PAPER.
THINKING ABOUT IT NOW, PERHAPS THE PICTURES WERE ACTING AS A SORT OF PSYCHIC REPELLANT FOR THE STORE'S CUSTOMERS. THERE WAS A NERVOUS WHISPER OF DESOLATION ABOUT THE PLACE.
ONLY *TWO* PEOPLE HAD VENTURED DOWNSTAIRS. I WAS DRAWN BY *CURIOSITY*, I SUPPOSE..
...BUT THE OTHER PERSON WAS DRAWN BY *EXPERIENCE*.

THE EXTERMINATION OF SIX MILLION-ODD PEOPLE — IT'S SOMETHING YOU THINK MUST COME OUT OF A FILM. DOESN'T SEEM REAL, DOES IT?
BUT JUST AT THAT MOMENT, WATCHING THIS OLD MAN BAWLING HIS EYES OUT, I KNEW IT WAS REAL TO HIM. HE'D BEEN THERE...
A HUNDRED DIFFERENT SCENARIOS PLAYED OUT IN MY MIND. I WANTED TO KNOW WHO HE WAS — FIND OUT WHAT HE KNEW.
MAYBE HE WAS IN ONE OF THE CAMPS, I THOUGHT.
PROBLEM IS, YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT THE HELL TO SAY, DO YOU?
I'M SORRY.

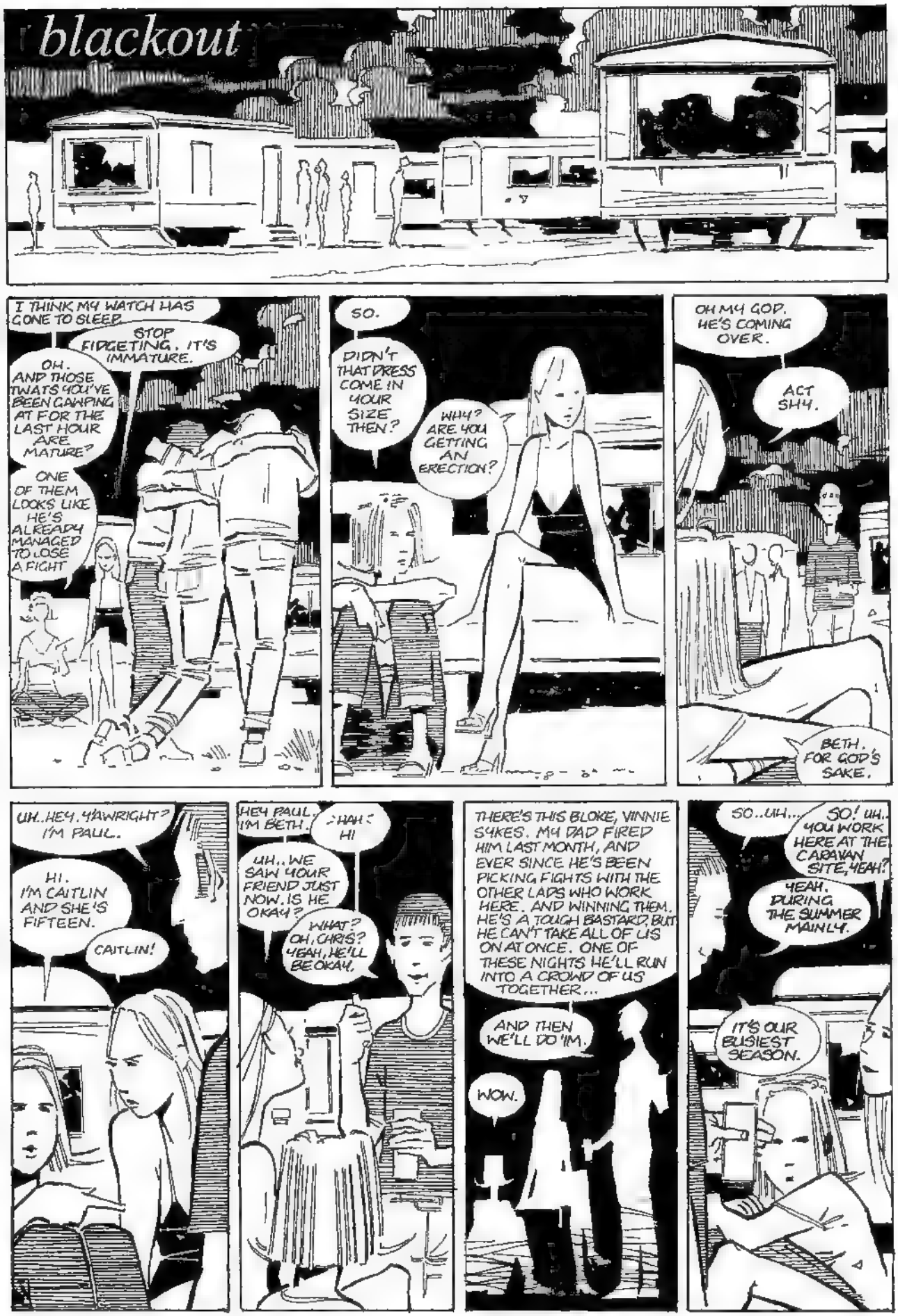
I AM TOO.
YOU KNOW... SOME PEOPLE SAY IT ALL NEVER HAPPENED.
ABBÉ PIERRE... HE'S THIS OLD FRENCH PRIEST, HELPED SAVE THE LIVES OF A THOUSAND JEWS IN THE WAR.
I READ IN THE PAPER THE OTHER DAY HOW HE'S NOW DECIDED THE WORD "HOLOCAUST" MIGHT BE TOO HARSH OF A DESCRIPTION.
THAT'S INSANE –
IT'S HORSESHIT. HE WAS THERE – HE SAW IT HAPPEN.
JEEZ, KID... YOU KNOW WHAT MAKES ME SO AFRAID, EVERY DAY OF MY LIFE?
...I'M AFRAID THAT I'LL FORGET.

THE OLD MAN'S NAME WAS PERCY. HE'D BEEN A GI IN THE WAR, SERVING WITH THE U.S. 3RD ARMORED DIVISION.
I LISTENED TO HIM DESCRIBE THE ALLIES' THRUST THROUGH EUROPE, UNABLE TO COMPREHEND THE ENORMITY OF HIS EFFORT TO SURVIVE.
HE SPOKE ALMOST CASUALLY OF MARCHING TRIUMPHANT THROUGH THE STREETS OF BRUSSELS, AND HOW GRATEFUL THE PEOPLE WERE TO BE LIBERATED.
I COULD HEAR THE PRIDE IN HIS VOICE AS HE TALKED ABOUT HIS MATES. MESMERIZED, I FOUND MYSELF WANDERING THROUGH PERCY'S MEMORIES...
PERCY'S VOICE WAVERED AS HE SPOKE ABOUT THE DAY HE AND A FEW OTHER LADS WERE SENT TO SCOUT AN AREA AHEAD, JUST OVER THE BELGIAN BORDER.
AND, AS HE STOOD IN A BOOKSTORE, TELLING ME ABOUT THE WAR, SIMULTANEOUSLY, HE WAS A YOUNG MAN ACROSS THE DECADES, RELIVING THE EVENTS OF APRIL 15TH, 1945.
THE DAY HE WALKED INTO THE NIGHTMARE.

IT WAS CALLED NORDHAUSEN... YOU PROBABLY NEVER HEARD OF IT, KID, BUT YOU *SHOULD* HAVE.
"THERE WAS BODIES EVERYWHERE, AND A LOW MOAN RISING OVER THE SUFFERING. THE WHOLE PLACE WAS JUST SHROUDED IN MISERY.
"I WAS TRYIN' TO KEEP MYSELF TOGETHER -- JUST UNABLE TO BELIEVE THAT THESE DAMNED SOULS COULD BE SO CALM. THEY'D JUST SHUT THEMSELVES *DOWN*, SEE?
"AN' AMONGST ALL THIS DEATH AN' GANGRENE AN' ABANDONED HOPE, I CAUGHT SIGHT OF THIS ONE LITTLE GIRL. COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE THAN SIX, MAYBE.
"THEY'D SHAVED HER HEAD SO THAT SHE LOOKED LIKE A LITTLE MONKEY -- SHE'D PROBABLY LIVED ALL HER LIFE WAITING TO BE GASSED.
"I JUST COULDN'T STAND IT. DESPITE ORDERS, I BENT DOWN TO GIVE HER A COUPLE OF BISCUITS.
"SHE LOOKED UP AT ME, AND IT WAS THE FIRST SIGN OF EMOTION I'D SEEN FROM ANY OF THE PEOPLE THERE. YOU COULD SEE THE QUESTION FORMING IN HER EYES --
" 'WHY DID YOU LET THIS *HAPPEN* TO ME?' "

YOU KNOW, I –
HE WAS A SENILE OLD SOLDIER WHO HADN'T SAID A WORD IN *YEARS*...
BUT PERCY WASN'T LISTENING ANYMORE, WAS HE?

LIKE I SAID, YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT TO SAY, DO YOU?
SEE, THERE'S NO SINGLE SENTENCE THAT CAN POSSIBLY BE ENOUGH.
EXCEPT FOUR WORDS, MAYBE. FOR PERCY'S SAKE.
"I WON'T FORGET YOU."

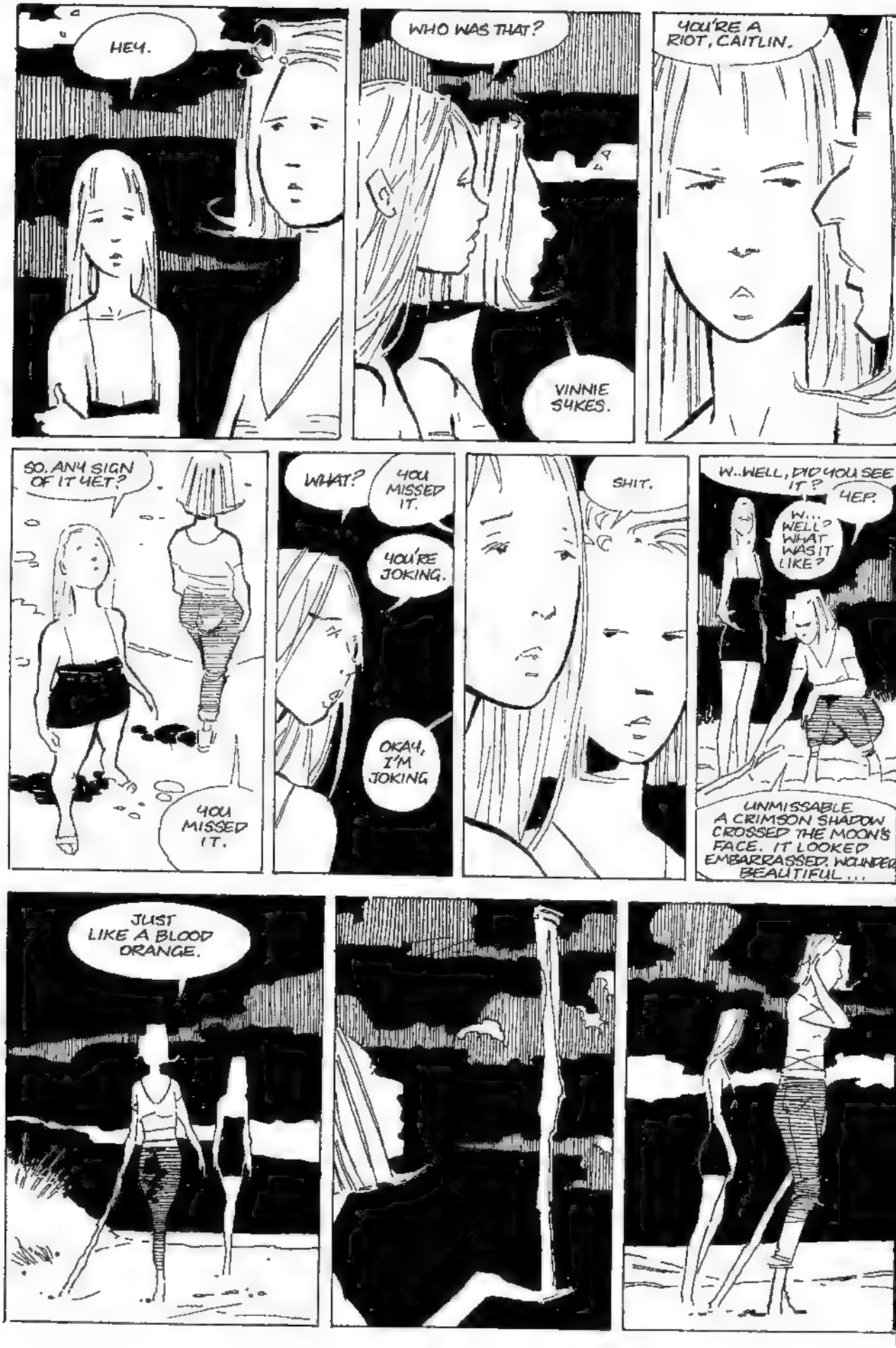

blackout
I THINK MY WATCH HAS GONE TO SLEEP.
STOP FIDGETING. IT'S IMMATURE.
OH. AND THOSE TWATS YOU'VE BEEN GAWPING AT FOR THE LAST HOUR ARE MATURE?
ONE OF THEM LOOKS LIKE HE'S ALREADY MANAGED TO LOSE A FIGHT
SO.
DIDN'T THAT DRESS COME IN YOUR SIZE THEN?
WHY? ARE YOU GETTING AN ERECTION?
OH MY GOD. HE'S COMING OVER.
ACT SHY.
BETH. FOR GOD'S SAKE.
UH..HEY. Y'AWRIGHT? I'M PAUL.
HI. I'M CAITLIN AND SHE'S FIFTEEN.
CAITLIN!
HEY PAUL. I'M BETH.
HAH! HI
UH.. WE SAW YOUR FRIEND JUST NOW. IS HE OKAY?
WHAT? OH, CHRIS? YEAH, HE'LL BE OKAY.
THERE'S THIS BLOKE, VINNIE SYKES. MY DAD FIRED HIM LAST MONTH, AND EVER SINCE HE'S BEEN PICKING FIGHTS WITH THE OTHER LADS WHO WORK HERE. AND WINNING THEM. HE'S A TOUGH BASTARD, BUT HE CAN'T TAKE ALL OF US ON AT ONCE. ONE OF THESE NIGHTS HE'LL RUN INTO A CROWD OF US TOGETHER...
AND THEN WE'LL DO 'IM.
WOW.
SO..UH...
SO! UH.. YOU WORK HERE AT THE CARAVAN SITE, YEAH?
YEAH. DURING THE SUMMER MAINLY.
IT'S OUR BUSIEST SEASON.

SO, UH... YOU ON HOLIDAY WITH YOUR FAMILY? OR...
YEAH. UNFORTUNATELY :HAH: I'M ACTUALLY STAYING AT THE OTHER SITE.
YEAH. I SAW YOU THERE THE OTHER DAY. YOU WERE SKETCHING, YEAH?
WELL, TRYING. :HAH:
NO, I SAW IT. IT WAS GOOD. I'M AN ARTIST MYSELF.
SHE GROANED INWARDLY.
HEY. MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO HAVE A LOOK AT SOME OF MY PAINTINGS.
THEY'RE OVER AT MY CARAVAN. THEY'RE NOT VERY GOOD, BUT...
NO! I'D LIKE THAT
UH.. AREN'T YOU FORGETTING SOMETHING?
WHAT? OH. OH! THE ECLIPSE
YOU'VE ONLY BEEN GOING ON ABOUT IT FOR THE LAST TWENTY FOUR HOURS.
HUH? ECLIPSE?
IT'S WHERE THAT BIG WHITE ROUND THING UP THERE GETS BLOTTED OUT BY THE EARTH'S SHADOW THEREBY PLUNGING THE WORLD ITSELF INTO A HIDEOUS DARKNESS FOREVER AND EVER. BUT HEY. SHIT HAPPENS.
IGNORE HER.
:HAH: RIGHT. WELL, SHALL WE...?
OH HEY! I KNOW! CAITLIN? YOU COULD HELP CATERING SET UP THE BARBEQ THEY NEED A HAND.
SORRY BUT I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO DO ANYTHING STRENUOUS LIKE THAT. I'M LACKING IN VITAMIN HALF WIT.
...UH...DON'T WORRY CAITLIN, I...I WON'T FORGET ABOUT THE ECLIPSE... WE'LL...BE BACK IN A BIT... ...OKAY?

YOU LOST SOMETHING UP THERE, MISSY?

I'M WAITING FOR THE ECLIPSE. I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE BEFORE.
YOU'LL 'AVE TO WAIT A BIT LONGER THEN. YOU'VE MISSED IT. IT WERE LAST NIGHT.
WHAT?!
IT WERE LAST NIGHT. ME AND MONTGOMERY SAW IT.
IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN! IT SAID IN TODAY'S PAPER THAT...
.OH SHIT! I MUST'VE BEEN READING YESTERDAY'S FUCKING PAPER. SHIT!
JUST LIKE A BLOOD ORANGE.
WHAT?
BEAUTIFUL IT WERE. SALMON PINK AT FIRST, THEN DARKER...
...DARKER, AND THEN...
BLACKOUT.

...A DEEP RED SHADOW COVERED THE MOON. JUST LIKE A BLOOD ORANGE. BEAUTIFUL.
FUCK. FUCK. FUCK.
BEAUTIFUL, BUT A BAD SIGN. BLOOD ON THE MOON IS AN OMEN OF BLOODSHED TO COME FOR THE WORLD.
:HAH: IT HAPPENS BECAUSE THE MOON, THE EARTH AND THE SUN COME INTO ALLIGNMENT.
GOD, I CAN'T BELIEVE I MISSED IT! IT'LL BE AGES NOW BEFORE THERE'S ANOTHER ONE. YOU'RE SO LUCKY YOU SAW IT.
WELL.. ME EYESIGHT'S NOT WHAT IT WERE. I'D'VE HAD BETTER SIGHT OF IT YEARS GONE BY.
WELL, YEAH. BUT AT LEAST YOU DIDN'T MISS IT.
I COULDN'T AFFORD TO.


HEY.
WHO WAS THAT?
VINNIE SYKES.
YOU'RE A RIOT, CAITLIN.
SO. ANY SIGN OF IT YET?
YOU MISSED IT.
WHAT?
YOU MISSED IT.
YOU'RE JOKING.
OKAY, I'M JOKING
SHIT.
W..WELL, DID YOU SEE IT?
YEP.
W... WELL? WHAT WAS IT LIKE?
UNMISSABLE. A CRIMSON SHADOW CROSSED THE MOON'S FACE. IT LOOKED EMBARRASSED. WOULDER BEAUTIFUL...
JUST LIKE A BLOOD ORANGE.

SONG BY GREG SAGE

# STORMY

ADAPTED BY GALEN SHOWMAN

HE..LO RAIN — SO GOOD TO SEE YOU NOW.
WASH AWAY — FOR I HOLD YOU NOW.
LET'S SLIP AWAY — GETTING STORMY OUT
WASH AWAY — THE BLUES YOU FEEL NOW
PUSH AHEAD — YOU RE MY TRUE FRIEND NOW— PUSH AHEAD .
IT'S GETTING STORMY OUT— YOL NEED A CHANGE FEELING STORMY NOW— NO NEED TO STAY.
WASH AWAY — FOR I'LL HOLD YOL NOW. NO NEED TO STAY — GETTING STORMY NOW
IT'S GETTING STORMY OUT — YOU NEED A CHANGE FEELING STORMY NOW— NO NEED TO STAY
WASH AWAY — THE B..UES YOU FEE.. NOW. WE SHOULD CAST THIS SAIL — THE WIND IS WITH US NOW NO NEED TO STAY —
GETTING STORMY NOW

"STORMY" FROM THE WIPERS ALBUM *THE HERD*. LYRICS BY GREG SAGE © 996 PART MUSIC (BMI) LYRICS USED BY PERMISSION ART © 1997 G SHOWMAN

# THE OLD REVERIE OF THE WARLOCKS

A Pantoum.

SHRIEKING SHAPES THAT STALK THE NIGHT,
I CAN HEAR THEM SCREAM AND MOAN:
FOX OR WOLF, THEY LOVE OR FIGHT,
AND I WAIT HERE ON MY OWN.

I CAN HEAR THEM SCREAM AND MOAN:
CLENCH MY NAILS INTO MY PALMS –
AND I WAIT HERE ON MY OWN,
PONDERING FORGOTTEN CHARMS.

CLENCH MY NAILS INTO MY PALMS.
– WHERE'S THE GIRDLE MADE OF PELT?
PONDERING FORGOTTEN CHARMS:
– WHERE'S MY LYCANTHROPIC BELT?

WHERE'S THE GIRDLE MADE OF PELT?
DID SHE BURN IT, STEAL IT, HIDE IT?
WHERE'S MY LYCANTHROPIC BELT?
(NEVER KNOCK IT TILL YOU'VE TRIED IT.)

DID SHE BURN IT, STEAL IT, HIDE IT?
– POUR MYSELF MORE WORMWOOD GIN –
NEVER KNOCK IT TILL YOU'VE TRIED IT;
TRYING TOO MUCH DOES YOU IN.

POUR MYSELF MORE WORMWOOD GIN,
BLESSED DRUNKENNESS ELUDES ME.
TRYING TOO MUCH DOES YOU IN,
TRUE, BUT JUST A LITTLE SOOTHES ME.

BLESSED DRUNKENNESS ELUDES ME.
ONCE, BENEATH THE MOON, WE RAN,
TRUE, (BUT JUST A LITTLE SOOTHES ME)
WOLF OR FOX OR CAT OR MAN.

ONCE, BENEATH THE MOON, WE RAN.
THAT WAS THEN. SHE HAS NOT AGED
WOLF OR FOX OR CAT OR MAN,
SHAPES IN WHICH OUR LOVE WE WAGED...

THAT WAS THEN, SHE HAS NOT AGED,
AND THE PALE MOON DISCOVERS
SHAPES IN WHICH OUR LOVE WE WAGED –
NOW SHE SHARES WITH OTHER LOVERS.

AND THE PALE MOON DISCOVERS
SHRIEKING SHAPES THAT STALK THE NIGHT.
NOW SHE SHARES, WITH OTHER LOVERS,
FOX OR WOLF, THEY LOVE, OR FIGHT.

written by Neil Gaiman
Illustration by Guy Davis

"WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?"
"I SAID I FIXED A MATCH."
"WHAT DO YOU MEAN? BOXING? A COCKFIGHT? WHAT?"
"WRESTLING "
"WRESTLING?"
"YEAH "
"PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING, MAN."
IN THIS CORNER, WEIGHING IN AT 333 POUNDS. . THE ONE... THE ONLY...
BONESHAKER
...IN "THE FIX"

AND IN THIS CORNER, THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENTAL TELEVISION CHAMPION...
DIABOLICO!
JEEZUS H!
DALE, I'M GOING TO ASK YOU A SERIES OF QUESTIONS.
AW, NO TOM. NOT THAT.

DALE, IT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES. I'M YOUR MENTOR, RIGHT?

UH-HUH.
NOW, ANSWER ME STRAIGHT.

YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME, TOM. I DID *NOT* FUCK THIS UP, I DID IT ALL BY THE NUMBERS, IT'S A LOCK!

DALE, BE STILL.
I'M TRYING TO BE PATIENT WITH YOU.
OKAY?
YEAH.
SO ANSWER EACH QUESTION AS I ASK THEM.

I KNOW HOW TO DO IT.
DON'T TALK BACK.
OKAY.
DALE, DID I ASK YOU A QUESTION JUST THEN?
UH... NO.

JEEZ, TITO, TAKE IT EASY. WE GOTTA G■ FOUR MORE ROUNDS!
NOW, MY FIRST QUESTION...
LISTEN.
WHO DID YOU FIX THIS WITH?

TOM I DON'T WANT TO QUEER IT.
TITO!
OK, OK, JEEZ.
IT WAS TITO CRANE, A PAL OF MY DAD'S.

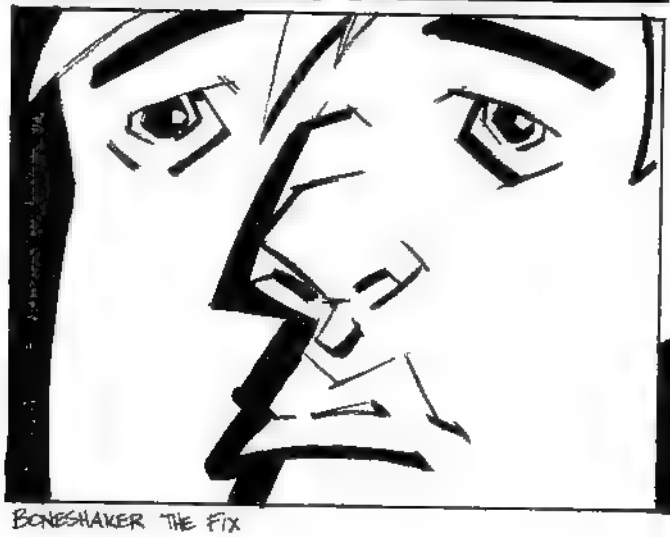
OKAY, WHAT'S HIS RING NAME?
POK!
BONESHAKER
SIGH. WHEN'S THE MATCH?
TONIGHT.

AND, WHAT'S THE ANGLE?
BONESHAKER PINS DIABOLICO IN THE FOURTH ROUND.
PLYTEX HOUSEHOLD GLOVES
WHAT ARE THE ODDS?
HOW YOU GONNA CLEAN UP?
PLYTEX HOUSEHOLD GLOVES

I DON'T KNOW. TITO SAYS THEY GOTTA BE PRETTY LONG SINCE DIABOLICO'S CHAMP. I HAVEN'T BEEN TO MARIO'S YET TO PLACE MY BET.
I KNOW THAT.
HOW?
DALE, YOU EVER HEAR OF ME OR NAILS OR EVEN DON GIORDANO FIXING A WRESTLING MATCH?
NO.
YOU EVER HEAR OF ANYONE SCORING BIG ON WRESTLING?
NO.

WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?
I DUNNO.

LISTEN CAREFULLY, DALE
OPEN YOUR MIND.



KRAK!
YOU CAN'T FIX A WRESTLING MATCH 'CUZ IT IS NOT A REAL GODDAMNED SPORT!
IT'S A SHOW KID! IT'S FAKE! IT'S ALREADY FIXED!
YOU MIGHT AS WELL HAVE FIXED A FUCKING BROADWAY MUSICAL!

OH.
OH, BOY.
SO TELL ME, EINSTEIN. HOW MUCH DID THIS BONESHAKER TAKE YOU FOR?
THREE THOUSAND

OKAY, LET'S FINISH UP THE JOB AND GET INTO THE CITY.
WE'RE GONNA GET YOUR MONEY BACK, KID.

12 B
SHHH. DOOR'S OPEN.

BEER
TOM!
SHADDUP!
SPSSHH
BEER

PTCO!

THOK!

ACK!
KLUD
.22'S ARE FOR BIRDS... -HUFF-
... AND SQUIRRELS
...SHOULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT .22'S.

YER PAL AIN'T BREATHING RIGHT, I HEARD THAT IN THE RING BEFORE.
GOT YER MONEY HERE.
THREE THOUSAND.
YOU'RE GIVING IT BACK?

I SCREWED UP. I DIDN'T TAKE DIABOLICO DOWN IN THE FOURTH.
I OWE YOU YER MONEY BACK
BUT... BUT TOM SAID WRESTLING WAS FAKE.

PUT YOUR ARM OUT.
KRAK!
YAAAAH!

THAT'S YER ELBOW JOINT
THAT FEEL FAKE?
N-NO.
ALL RIGHT THEN. ROOM IS PAID FOR THRU TOMORROW IF YOU AND YOUR PAL WANT TO REST UP.
I GOTTA GO. GOT A CAGE MATCH IN DUBUQUE WITH BARON VON RASCHKE.
SORRY ABOUT THE FIX, KID.

BONESHAKER - THE FIX

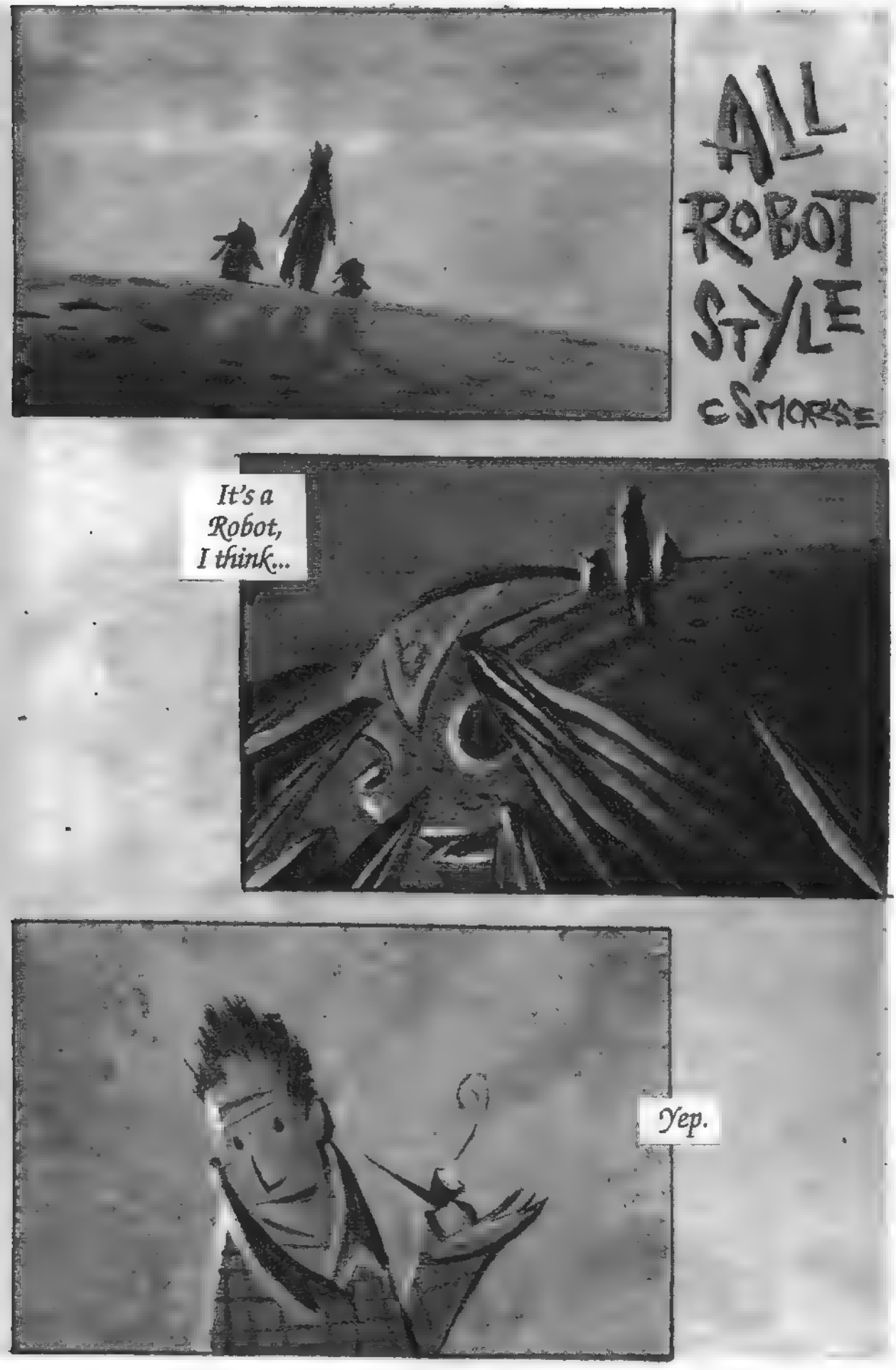
-END-

HESTER · WOODYARD

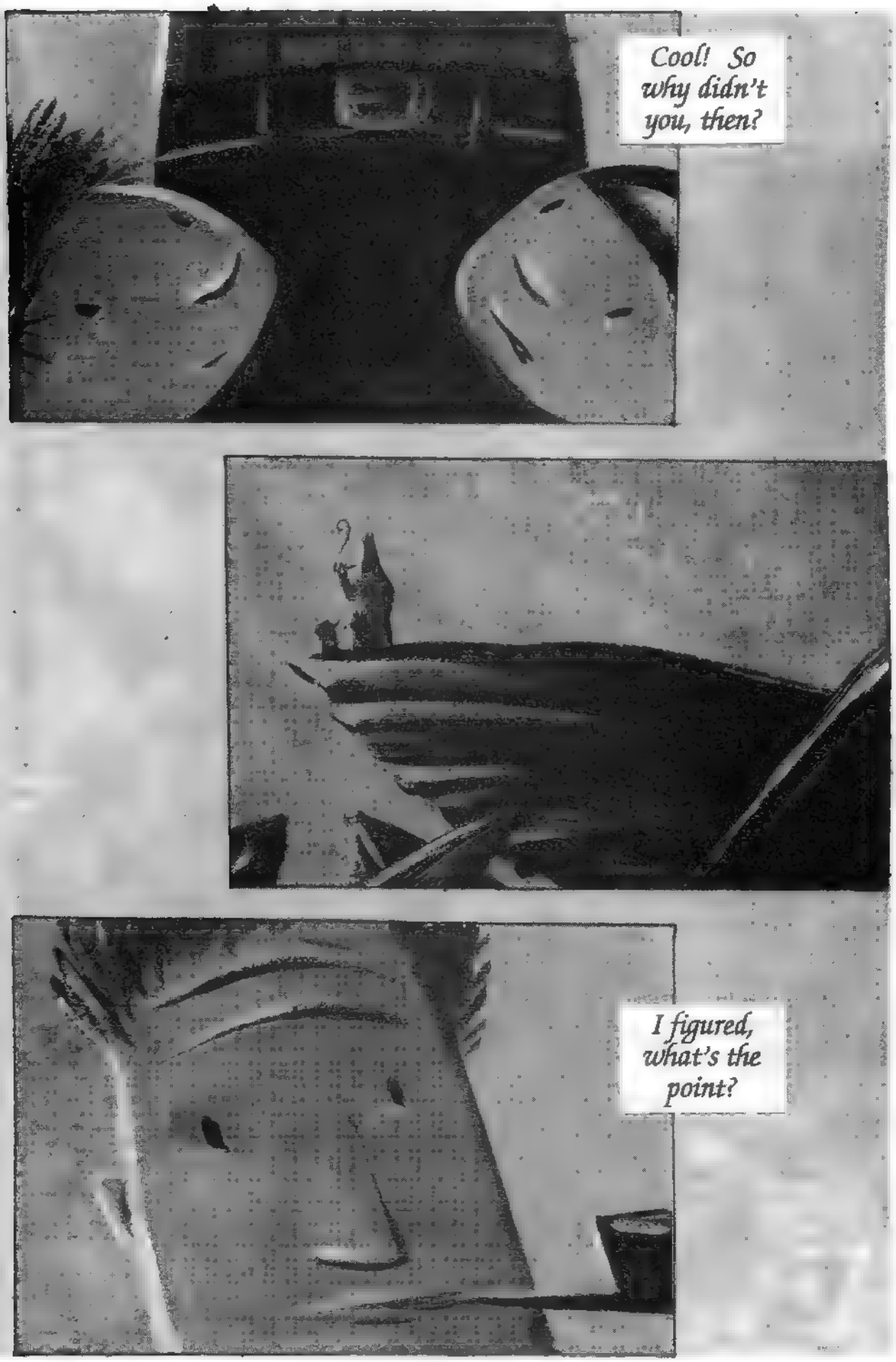
# THE PHALANXES OF THE HOUSE ORDER

DARKO MACAN EDVIN BIUKOVIĆ

AFTER THE MONTHS OF SEARCHING
IS EVERYONE ARMED PRITCH?
YES
LET'S GO
WE THE VETERANS OF INTERNATIONAL BRIGADES HAVE FINALLY FOUND
WHERE THE REMAINING FALANGISTAS ARE HIDING
AND HELL IS ABOUT TO BREAK LOSE!
39
NOK!
NOK!
OPEN UP, DE VALLELLANO!
YOU'LL NEVER GET US ALIVE!
BZK
STOP!!
WHAT'S THIS? IT SEEMS THAT YOU'VE FORGOTTEN THAT THE CURFEW WAS AT TEN!
?!
GIMMIE THAT! WHEREVER DO YOU FIND THEM?!
CA!
TAKE AWAY THEIR DESSERTS! YOU HEAR ME? DESSERTS!
Fin

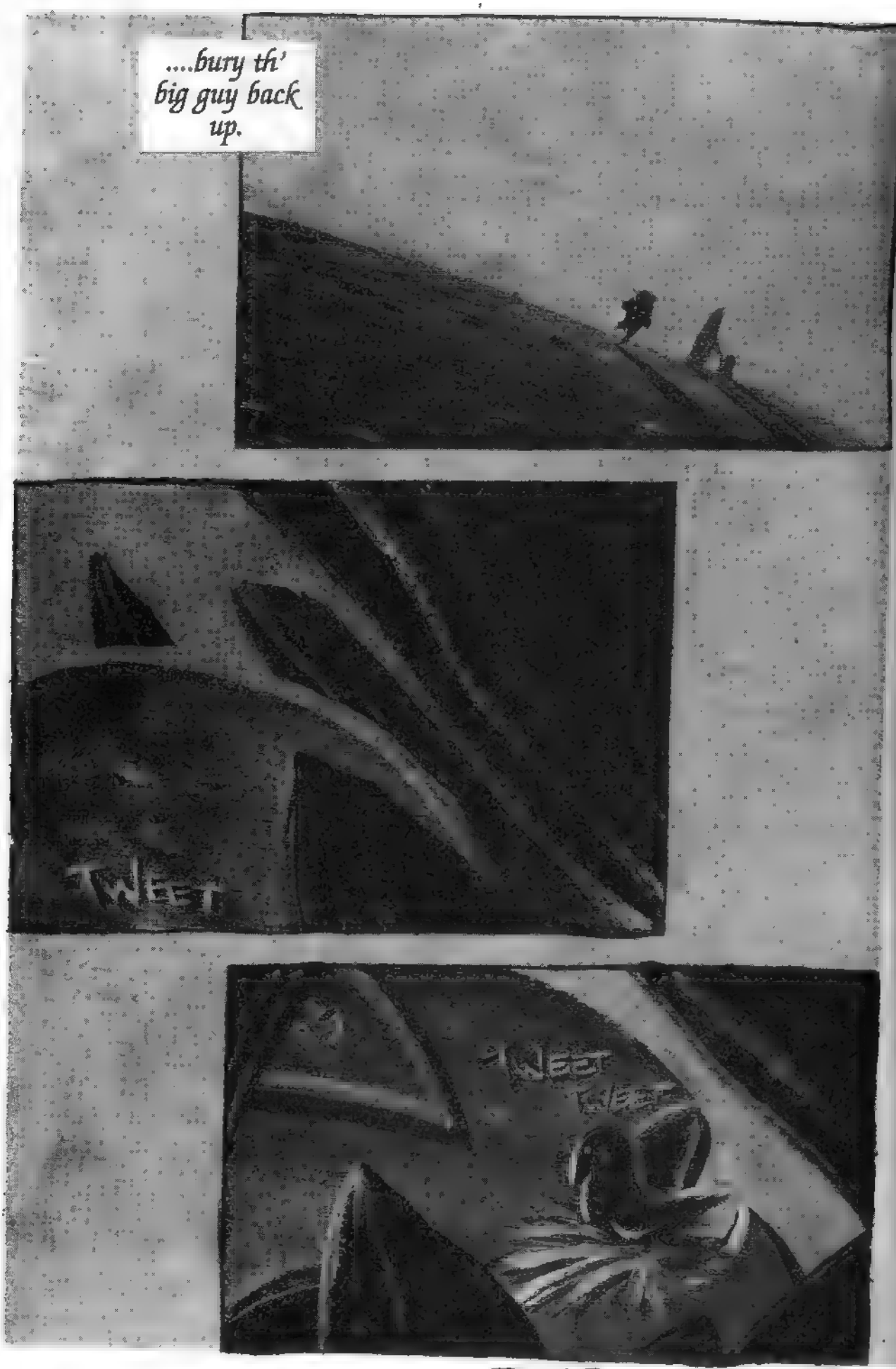

ALL ROBOT STYLE
cSMORSE
It's a Robot, I think...
Yep.

He's mine.
Built him back in '64, to take over th' world.


Cool! So why didn't you, then?
I figured, what's the point?

What would I do then?
I'd ride around on top of the robot, people would fight me, I'd fight them...
....I mean, who needs that?

So your mother and I made you instead.
Let's go get some shovels...

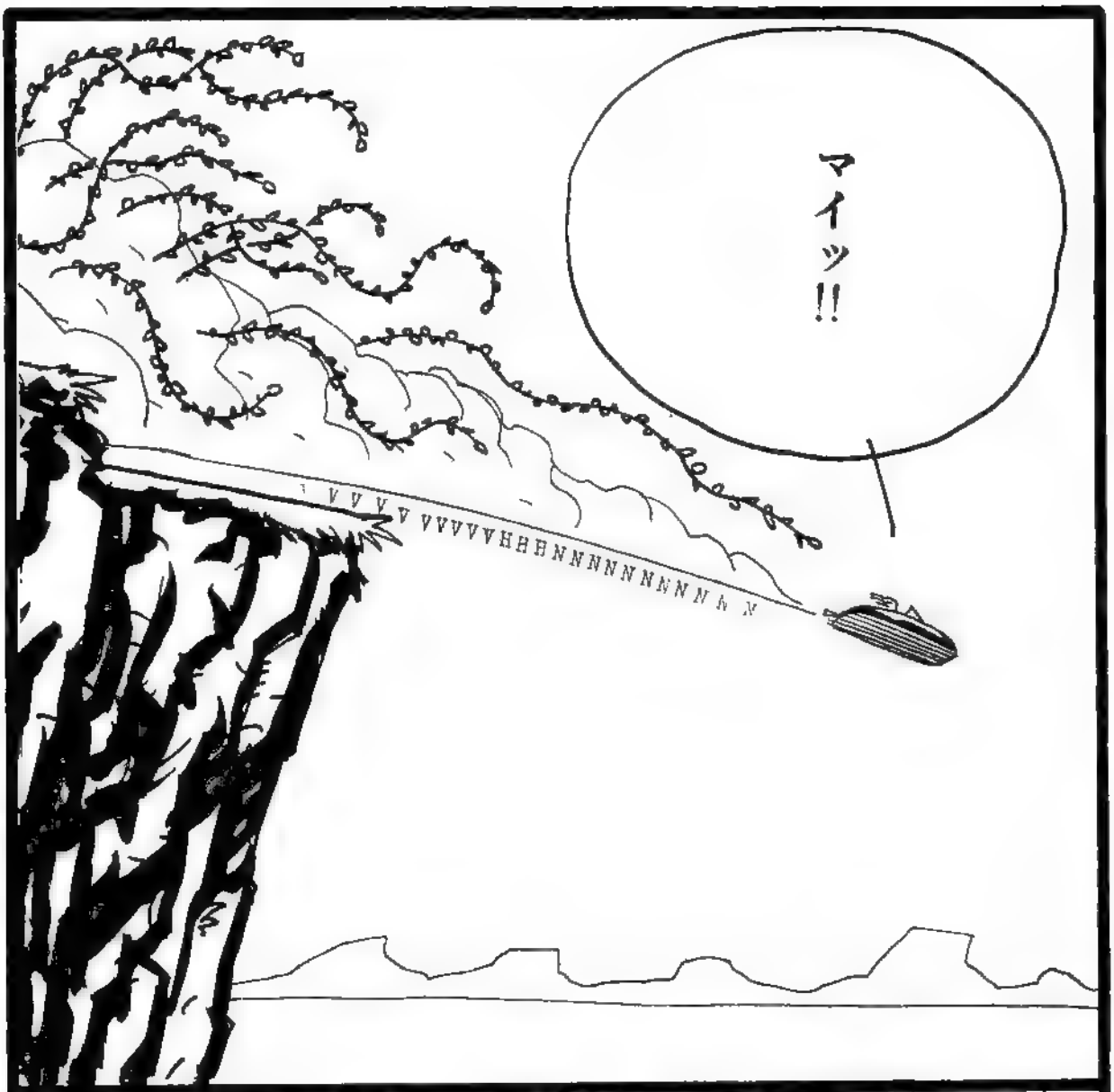

....bury th' big guy back up.
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
END

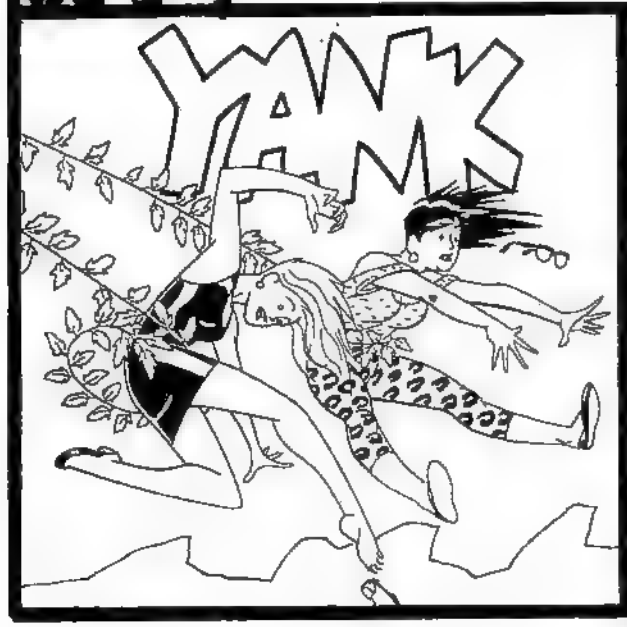
小学生のひよこ
図画は不得手である
よっしゃ！
しばき倒し
たる！
DINER
CHICKS. HOTRODS AND KUDZU
JOHNSON
'97
地獄、餓鬼、
畜生、修羅、
いわゆる負の
エネルギーの
集積であり
しかも凝縮して
それ自体が
強力で邪悪な力を
発動する……
SLURP
見知らぬ男が
あたしを
探してる？
見ろ!!
人がいるぞ

助けてくれたんだねありがとう
瞳はいつもその欠けている何かを追い求め彷徨ってるの
BILL
BILL
キースに連絡してくれ下のゲートで張ってるハズだ
CA-CHING

ZOOM
ZOOM
軍用デハナイ
ヨウデスガ武装
シテマス
カナリかすた
まいずサレテル
ヨウデス
DANGER
MUTANT
KUDZU
先生この人に
助けてもらい
ましたぁ

少女だ!!
美しい少女
だぁ——
エキゾ!



KUDZU IS NOT EVIL.

END

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, HOME OF BENJAMIN MATTHEWS...
STORY: JOE PRUETT
ART JON HAWARD
LETTERING: ROXANNE STARR
BENJAMIN, OR "SPAZ" AS HIS CO-WORKERS DOWN AT THE BUTCHER SHOP CALL HIM, IS A STRANGE, PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL. HE DOESN'T HAVE MANY FRIENDS--HE'LL BE THE FIRST TO ADMIT THAT. BUT THEN AGAIN, HE NEVER HAS
BENJAMIN LIVES ALONE. SURE, HE PUT ADS IN THE LOCAL PAPER FOR A ROOMMATE, BUT NOT MANY ANSWERED, AND THOSE THAT DID...WELL, THEY WEREN'T VERY NICE.
BEING AN ONLY CHILD, BENJAMIN IS ACCUSTOMED TO BEING ALONE. HE HASN'T SEEN HIS FATHER SINCE HE WAS FIVE AND A HALF. HIS MOTHER RAN OFF WITH A BIKER WHEN HE WAS SEVEN
BENJAMIN HASN'T HAD A DATE IN NEARLY SEVEN MONTHS. HIS LAST DATE WAS ALLERGIC TO CATS
THAT WAS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. HE LOVED HIS CATS.
HIS CATS WERE THE ONLY THING THAT KEPT HIM GOING.
PURRRR

THE THINGS ABOUT CATS IS THAT THEY DO LEAVE A PECULIAR SMELL.
SNIFF
SNIFF
LIVING WITH CATS FOR SO LONG THOUGH, BENJAMIN HAS GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO THE INCONVENIENCES.
IF ONLY THEY DIDN'T SMELL SO VULGAR.
PSSSSS
LYSOL
HE HAD ALL BUT FORGOTTEN ABOUT HIS NEW TOY, THE PRESENT HE HAD BOUGHT FOR HIMSELF.
A NEW PLAYMATE.
MEOW...

KNOCK! KNOCK!
HI. MY NAME IS WENDY AND THIS IS HEATHER. WE'RE FROM FLORIDA AND WE'RE TRYING TO WIN A TRIP TO HAWAII BY SELLING THE MOST MAGAZINES...
SPICE UP YOUR LIFE
I'M NOT INTERESTED...
SLAM!!!

DID YOU SMELL HIS APARTMENT? SMELLS LIKE SOMETHING DIED IN THERE.
HE WAS NASTY. HIS B.O. ALONE WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE ME WANT TO THROW UP.
MISSING
Siamese Cat
Answers to "Sparky"
MISSING
Siamese Cat
Answers to "Sparky"
Black with whi stripe down ck. Reward if found.
Please call 555-9292.
WHERE THE HELL DID THE KITTEN GO?
HERE, KITTY, KITTY, KITTY.
HE'S OVER HERE, BENJAMIN.

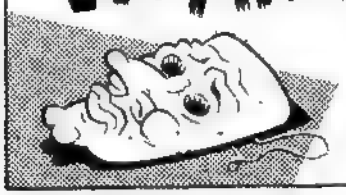
THE KITTEN DOESN'T LIKE YOU, BENJAMIN.
FRANKLY, NEITHER DO I.
PURRRRR
YOU'VE BEEN A BAD BOY. YOU NEED TO BE PUNISHED.
BUT...I-I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO YOU. I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO YOU ARE.

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO ME, OR EVEN TO YOUR FELLOW MAN, THAT DISGUSTS ME, BENJAMIN.
IT'S YOUR NASTY HOBBY.
CRAK
MY...MY HOBBY? BUT THEY'RE MY FRIENDS..THEY UNDERSTAND..
DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHEN A CREATURE, BIGGER AND STRONGER THAN YOU, DECIDES TO USE YOU FOR HIS OWN AMUSEMENT?
DO YOU?!
THUNK!
HUH? .. WHAT'RE YOU DOING? GO AWAY.
HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE SAYING, "WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND?"
YOUR CATS HAVE.
NOOOO!
NOOOO!

PARAMEDIC
...I TOLD YOU SOMETHING WAS WRONG WITH HIM.
HE WAS JUST TOO WEIRD.
THANKS FOR YOUR HELP. DO YOU BOTH HAVE NUMBERS WHERE YOU CAN BE REACHED IF NECESSARY?
THAT'S WHAT I HEARD. HE HAD BEEN KILLING CATS AND HANGING THEM IN ONE OF HIS BEDROOMS.
I THOUGHT HIS PLACE STUNK, BUT I NEVER EXPECTED SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
WHO WOULD?
AND HE WAS ATTACKED BY ALL HIS MANGY CATS? THAT'S WHAT KILLED HIM?
THAT'S WHAT I HEARD. IT WAS LIKE THEY HAD A PURPOSE.
LIKE IT WAS PLANNED.
THAT'S THE MOST RIDICULOUS THING I EVER HEARD. CATS DON'T PLAN ATTACKS. THEY AIN'T THAT SMART. HE PROBABLY JUST STARVED THEM, THAT'S ALL.
WELL, IF YOU ASK ME, HE GOT WHAT HE DESERVED.
HUH.
MAYBE, BUT WHO'S TO SAY?
FIN

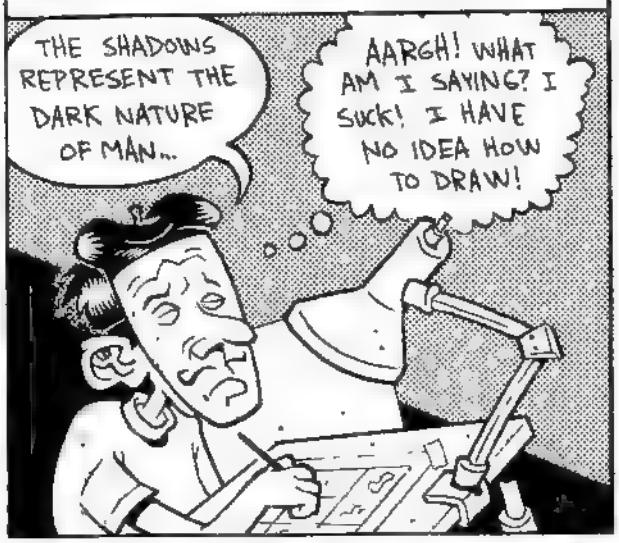
a few ob

# THE MANY MASKS I WEAR...



by
:GREG DIGENTI:

AT THE DRAWING TABLE, I WEAR THE MASK OF A SERIOUS ARTIST...




WITH MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX, I WEAR THE MASK OF A GUY WHO LOOKS AS THOUGH HE MIGHT KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ANYTHING ABOUT WHAT HE'S DOING...

SO, WHY DON'T YOU GIVE ME YOUR NUMBER AND I'LL GIVE YOU A CALL SOMETIME...
I SAW A GUY DO THIS IN A MOVIE ONCE, ONLY HE DIDN'T SEEM LIKE SUCH A DORK WHEN HE SAID IT.

WHEN I'M OUT IN A PUBLIC PLACE, I WEAR THE MASK OF SOMEONE NOT SCARED OUT OF THEIR SKULL...

AHH... GROCERY STORES... WHERE PEOPLE OF ALL KINDS COME TOGETHER...
WHERE DO ALL THESE FREAKS COME FROM? THERE'S NO WAY I'M PART OF THE SAME SPECIES! JEEZUS! GET OUT OF THE WAY, GRAMPS!

WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND MY CONTROL LAND ME IN A STRIP JOINT, I WEAR THE MASK OF A GUY WHO'S BUYING THE WHOLE CHARADE...

YES, I DO BELIEVE SHE WANTS ME- THIS IS QUITE ENJOYABLE AND WELL-WORTH THE MONEY...
THIS IS TORTURE! THERE'S NO PAYOFF AND I'VE SPENT WAY TOO MUCH CASH ALREADY! PLUS: MY NECK IS KILLING ME!

WHEN I'M FORCED TO TALK WITH IDIOTS, I WEAR THE MASK OF SOMEONE WHO GIVES A RAT'S ASS...

END

# The Survivors

By Mark Kneece & Durwin Talon

DEGGENDORF, GERMANY, 1961.

CASTLE REISIGEHAUSEN GLOWERS OVER THE DANUBE...

AGE HAS FINALLY CAUGHT UP WITH FRAU SCHLEFFENDORF.

SHE DIES WITH ONLY TWO SERVANTS FOR COMPANY, TWO WHO HAVE SERVED HER SINCE THEIR CHILDHOOD.

THEY ALONE STAYED WITH HER THROUGH ALL OF THE PETULANT STORMS OF HER INCREASING IRRATIONALITY.

HEINZE UND MATILDA... COME CLOSER.

FRAU SCHLEFFENDORF WAS FROM THE OLD SCHOOL...

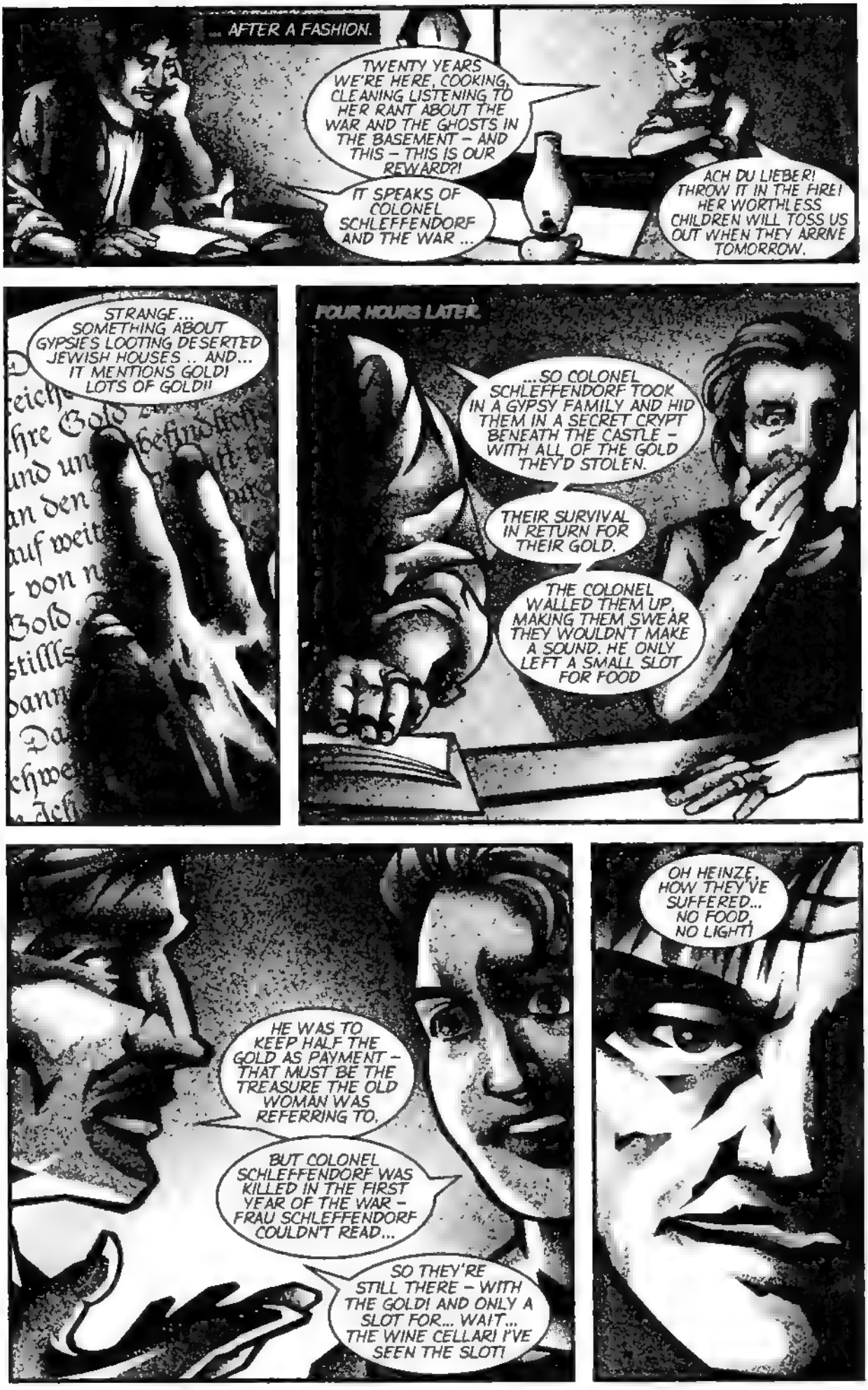
MY WEALTH HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO OTHERS... YET YOU DESERVE SOMETHING, TOO.

...WHERE WOMEN WERE NOT TAUGHT AS MEN – SHE'D NEVER LEARNED TO READ...

COLONEL SCHLEFFENDORF'S WRITTING – THERE ON THE BUREAU. HE TOLD ME ONCE THAT IT HOLDS SECRET WEALTH.

WHATEVER IT SAYS. IT'S YOURS.

...BUT INFIRM AS SHE WAS, SHE PAID HER DEBTS.


... AFTER A FASHION.
TWENTY YEARS WE'RE HERE, COOKING, CLEANING LISTENING TO HER RANT ABOUT THE WAR AND THE GHOSTS IN THE BASEMENT – AND THIS – THIS IS OUR REWARD?!
IT SPEAKS OF COLONEL SCHLEFFENDORF AND THE WAR ...
ACH DU LIEBER! THROW IT IN THE FIRE! HER WORTHLESS CHILDREN WILL TOSS US OUT WHEN THEY ARRIVE TOMORROW.
STRANGE... SOMETHING ABOUT GYPSIES LOOTING DESERTED JEWISH HOUSES .. AND... IT MENTIONS GOLD! LOTS OF GOLD!!
FOUR HOURS LATER.
...SO COLONEL SCHLEFFENDORF TOOK IN A GYPSY FAMILY AND HID THEM IN A SECRET CRYPT BENEATH THE CASTLE – WITH ALL OF THE GOLD THEY'D STOLEN.
THEIR SURVIVAL IN RETURN FOR THEIR GOLD.
THE COLONEL WALLED THEM UP, MAKING THEM SWEAR THEY WOULDN'T MAKE A SOUND. HE ONLY LEFT A SMALL SLOT FOR FOOD
HE WAS TO KEEP HALF THE GOLD AS PAYMENT – THAT MUST BE THE TREASURE THE OLD WOMAN WAS REFERRING TO.
BUT COLONEL SCHLEFFENDORF WAS KILLED IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR – FRAU SCHLEFFENDORF COULDN'T READ...
SO THEY'RE STILL THERE – WITH THE GOLD! AND ONLY A SLOT FOR... WAIT... THE WINE CELLAR! I'VE SEEN THE SLOT!
OH HEINZE, HOW THEY'VE SUFFERED... NO FOOD, NO LIGHT!

FROM LONG EXPERIENCE WITH THE CASTLE, HEINZE KNEW THE SPOT.
...A SMALL SLIT IN THE BRICKS – BIG ENOUGH FOR A TRAY OF FOOD PERHAPS – FOOD THAT ONE DAY ABRUPTLY STOPPED.
THEY HAD TO BE ABSOLUTELY QUIET. THE COLONEL WOULD HAVE BEEN SHOT IF ANYONE HAD DISCOVERED THE GYPSIES HERE. STILL, THEY MUST HAVE MADE SOME SOUNDS...
THE OLD LADY THOUGHT THERE WERE GHOSTS
I GUESS GOLD MEANT MORE TO HIM THAN HIS PRECIOUS ARYAN RACE.
WHY DIDN'T HE MAKE ANY PROVISIONS FOR THEM? DIDN'T HE KNOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF HE GOT KILLED?
KEEPING THAT DIARY WAS VERY DANGEROUS. IF ANY OF HIS S.S. FRIENDS FOUND OUT...
I GUESS HE FIGURED THAT IF HE DIED, SOMEONE'D READ IT SOONER OR LATER. HE PROBABLY DIDN'T THINK IT'D BE THIS MUCH LATER.
OR MAYBE HE JUST DIDN'T GIVE A DAMN.

DID YOU HEAR THAT?
PROBABLY JUST RATS
LOOK! THESE CRYPTS HAVE BEEN OPENED.
MY GOD, IMAGINE BEING SHUT UP IN HERE!
...AND EMPTIED!
GASP!

WHAT ARE THEY?!
IT'S A BOY AND A GIRL, HALF GROWN I'D SAY - THEY MUST BE DESCENDANTS OF THOSE GYPSIES!!
ALIVE AFTER ALL THIS TIME?! MY GOD!
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE! TELL SOMEONE! MAYBE THEY CAN BE HELPED
NO, THE GOLD.
GOLD?
YES, GOLD - YOU UNDERSTAND?
GOLD.
THE STRANGE CHILDREN RUSH OFF WITH THE LAMP...
LET'S FOLLOW THEM - THEY'RE GOING TO THE GOLD!
I - I DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA, HEINZE.

WITHOUT FOOD, THEY MUST HAVE EATEN RATS, INSECTS, AND – MY GOD, THE REMAINS OF THE SCHLEFFENDORFS. THEY WERE CONCEIVED AND BORN HERE!
YES. UNFORTUNATELY. THEY MUST NEVER LEAVE. IF THEY TALKED IT MIGHT... COMPLICATE THINGS FOR US.
NO ONE HAS MISSED THEM IN ALL THESE YEARS. NO ONE WILL NOW.
KEEP AN EYE ON THEM. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
HEINZE, WAIT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? DON'T GO OFF LIKE THAT! DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE WITH – THEM! HEINZE!
HEINZE! HEINZE!!!
THEY WILL HEAR!
SILENCE. SILENCE, YOU

INTENT UPON HIS PLAN, HEINZE HAD IGNORED MATILDA'S CRIES. UPON HIS RETURN TO THE CRYPT, THERE WAS ONLY SILENCE.
I'M GLAD MATILDA FINALLY SETTLED DOWN. SOON SHE'LL UNDERSTAND.
NOW SHE IS QUIET.
MATILDA! NOOOOOO! NOOOOOOO!
THIS MUST BE THE MOIST FOOD THE OLD ONES DESCRIBED.
THE RULE! STAY QUIET OR THEY WILL HEAR.

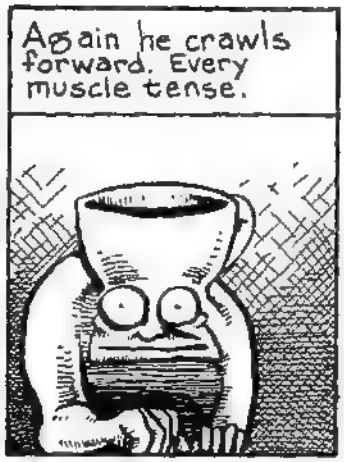
TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN
BY SHANNON WHEELER
.114
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
ARE YOU IN THE MARKET FOR SOME REAL ESTATE?
NO. I CAN'T AFFORD IT.
IT'S CHEAPER THAN YOU'D THINK. I'M SELLING HOUSES IN HEAVEN. YOU CAN AFFORD ANYTHING YOU WANT: 3, 5 OR 7 BEDROOMS, MODERN OR CLASSICAL STYLE, A GOOD VIEW OR BEACH FRONT PROPERTY, EVEN A CASTLE WITH MOAT IF YOU LIKE.
AND IT'S PERFECT BECAUSE IT'S IN HEAVEN!
YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU. BUT WOULDN'T IT BE NICE TO HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU WHEN YOU GET THERE?
I WANT A MANSION!
WOW! I CAN'T WAIT TO DIE!

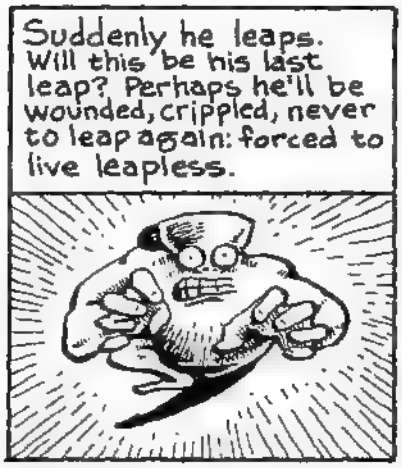
BY: SHANNON WHEELER ©1997 WEBSITE: WWW.TMCM.COM MAIL: CAFE@EDEN.COM
FOR A CATALOG OF COMICS- SEND A BUCK: BOX 5372 AUSTIN TX 78763

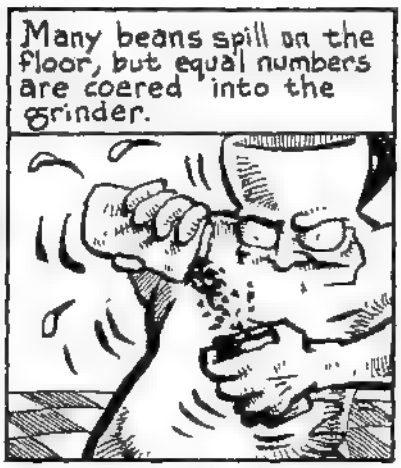
TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN'S

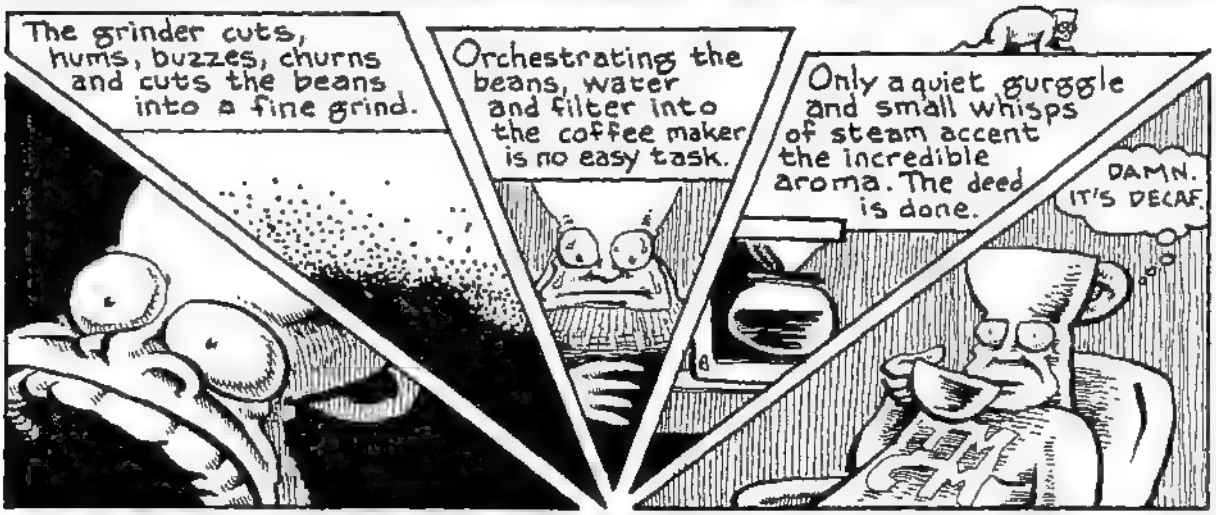
# ADVENTURE THEATRE

The hunter sits and waits: knowing that patience is his greatest ally. He also knows that his greatest trial lies ahead and that he can't wait forever.





Suddenly he leaps. Will this be his last leap? Perhaps he'll be wounded, crippled, never to leap again: forced to live leapless.





The grinder cuts, hums, buzzes, churns and cuts the beans into a fine grind.
Orchestrating the beans, water and filter into the coffee maker is no easy task.
Only a quiet gurggle and small whisps of steam accent the incredible aroma. The deed is done.
DAMN. IT'S DECAF.

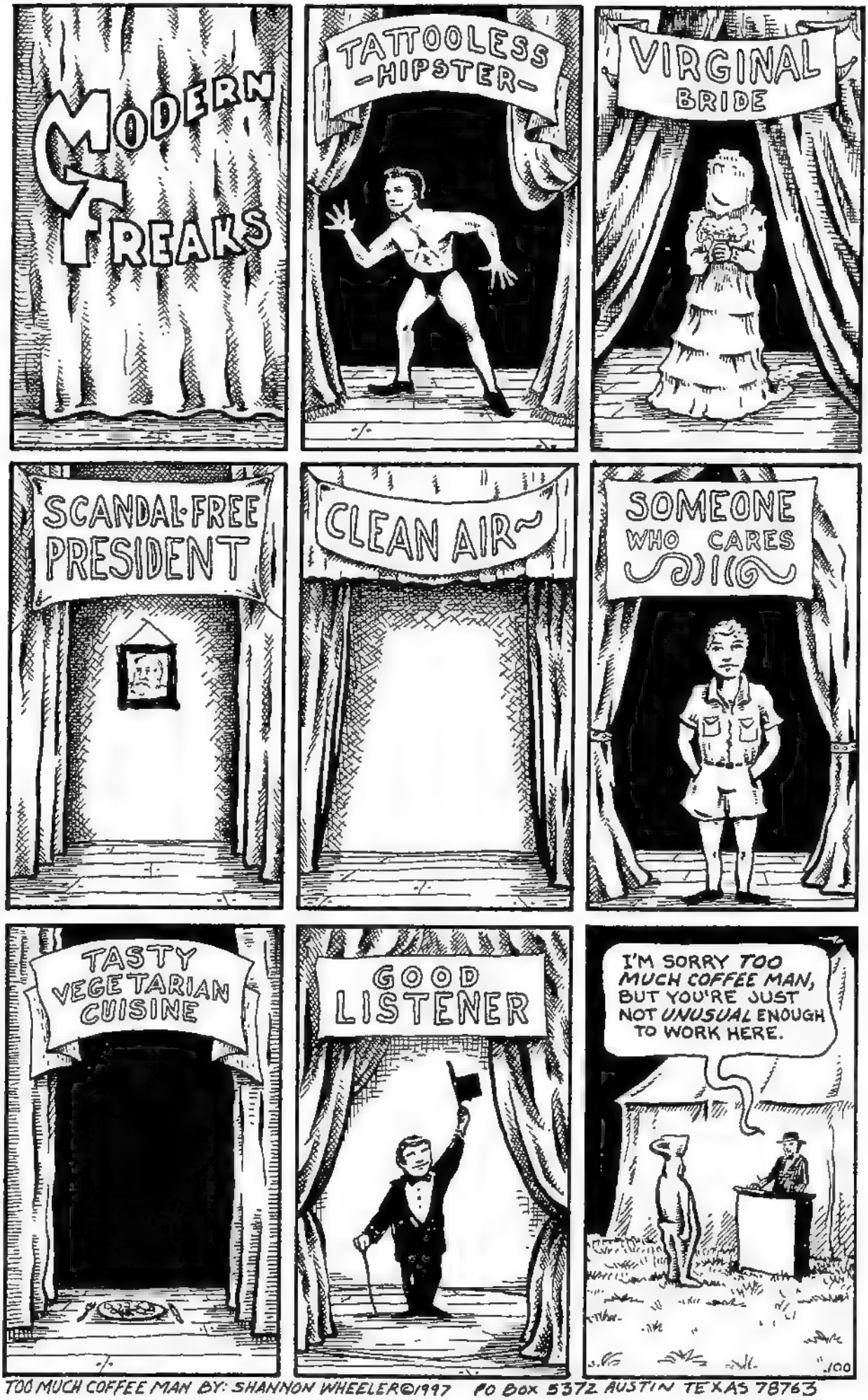
SEND FOR A CATALOG OF COMICS & T-SHIRTS: PO BOX 5372 AUSTIN TEXAS 78763

# TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN™

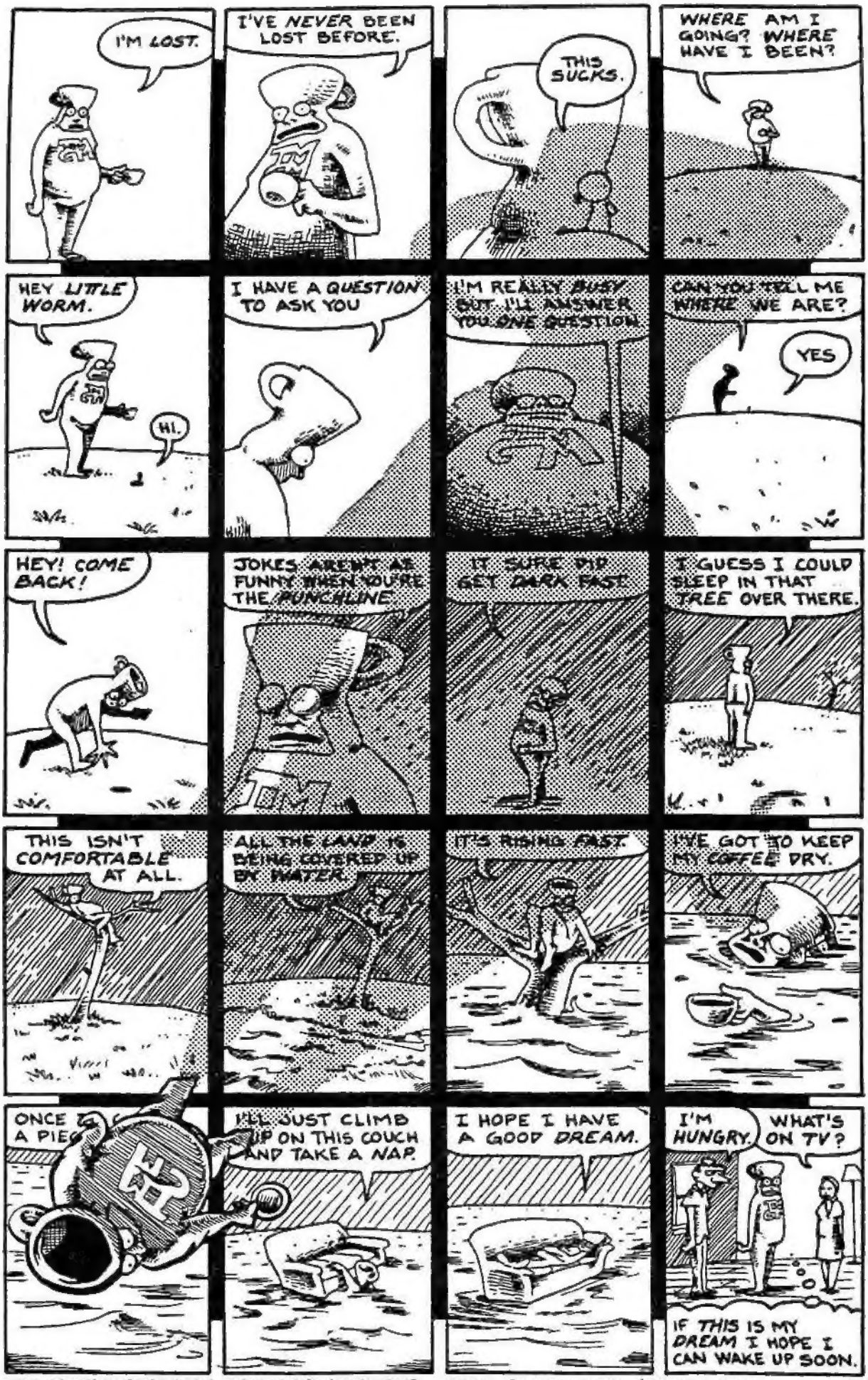
AND ESPRESSO GUY

DO YOU WANT TO SEE SOMETHING WEIRD?
SURE. I GUESS SO.
ISN'T IT WEIRD? I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I COULD DO THAT.
THAT IS THE MOST REVOLTING THING I HAVE EVER SEEN.
DON'T WORRY I CAN POP IT BACK IN.
SEE. GOOD AS NEW.
PARDON ME WHILE I THROW UP.
I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO GROSS YOU OUT.
NO. NOT AT ALL. I WANTED TO SHOW YOU HOW I CAN THROW UP AT WILL.
WOW. COOL.

BY SHANNON WHEELER©1997 EMAIL: CAFE@EDEN.COM WEBSITE: WWW.TMCM.COM
FOR A CATALOG OF COMICS SEND A BUCK TO: BOX 5372 AUSTIN TEXAS 78763 (.113)

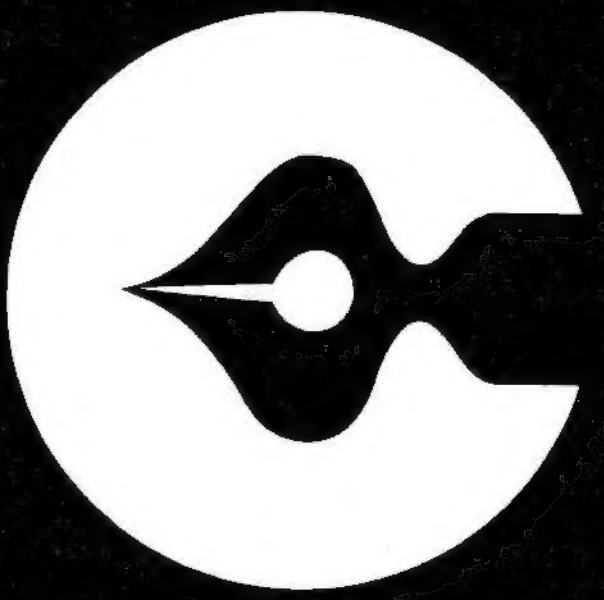



TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY: SHANNON WHEELER©1997 PO BOX 5372 AUSTIN TEXAS 78763


I'M LOST.
I'VE NEVER BEEN LOST BEFORE.
THIS SUCKS.
WHERE AM I GOING? WHERE HAVE I BEEN?
HEY LITTLE WORM.
HI.
I HAVE A QUESTION TO ASK YOU
I'M REALLY BUSY BUT I'LL ANSWER YOU ONE QUESTION.
CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE WE ARE?
YES
HEY! COME BACK!
JOKES AREN'T AS FUNNY WHEN YOU'RE THE PUNCHLINE.
IT SURE DID GET DARK FAST.
I GUESS I COULD SLEEP IN THAT TREE OVER THERE.
THIS ISN'T COMFORTABLE AT ALL.
ALL THE LAND IS BEING COVERED UP BY WATER.
IT'S RISING FAST.
I'VE GOT TO KEEP MY COFFEE DRY.
ONCE
A PIE
I'LL JUST CLIMB UP ON THIS COUCH AND TAKE A NAP.
I HOPE I HAVE A GOOD DREAM.
I'M HUNGRY.
WHAT'S ON TV?
IF THIS IS MY DREAM I HOPE I CAN WAKE UP SOON.

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY: SHANNON WHEELER ©1997 PO BOX 5732 AUST TX 78763 (102)

+

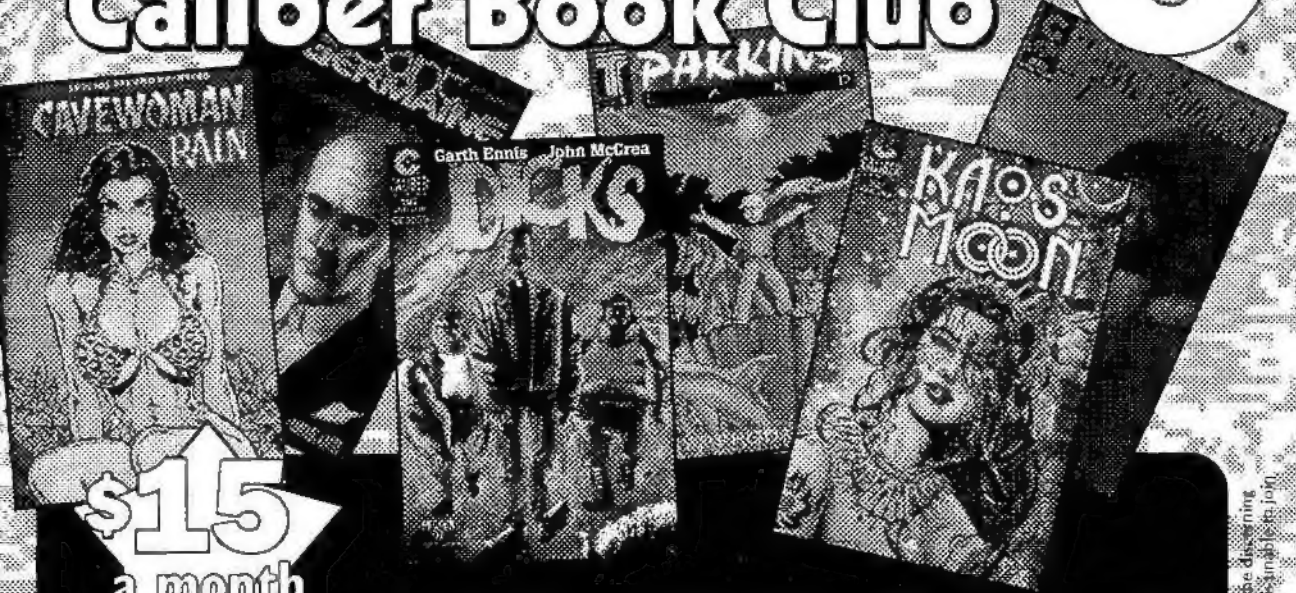


=

www.calibercomics.com

# COMICS EVERY MONTH GUARANTEED!

# Be a Member of the Caliber Book Club




**$15 a month**

**Members get 10 different books a month!** At least seven books are current titles and one issue is a special or signed edition!

**Members receive a 30% discount on any book they order from Caliber.** Skip the shipping charge. Have your additional orders ship with your monthly Club shipment.

Members are kept up-to-date with the goings-on! All the latest news and releases from Caliber.

Members get opportunities to order special sets and signed books at reduced prices!

A club so incredible it has some weird folks dancin' like nuts!

Them Peanuts got nothin'!

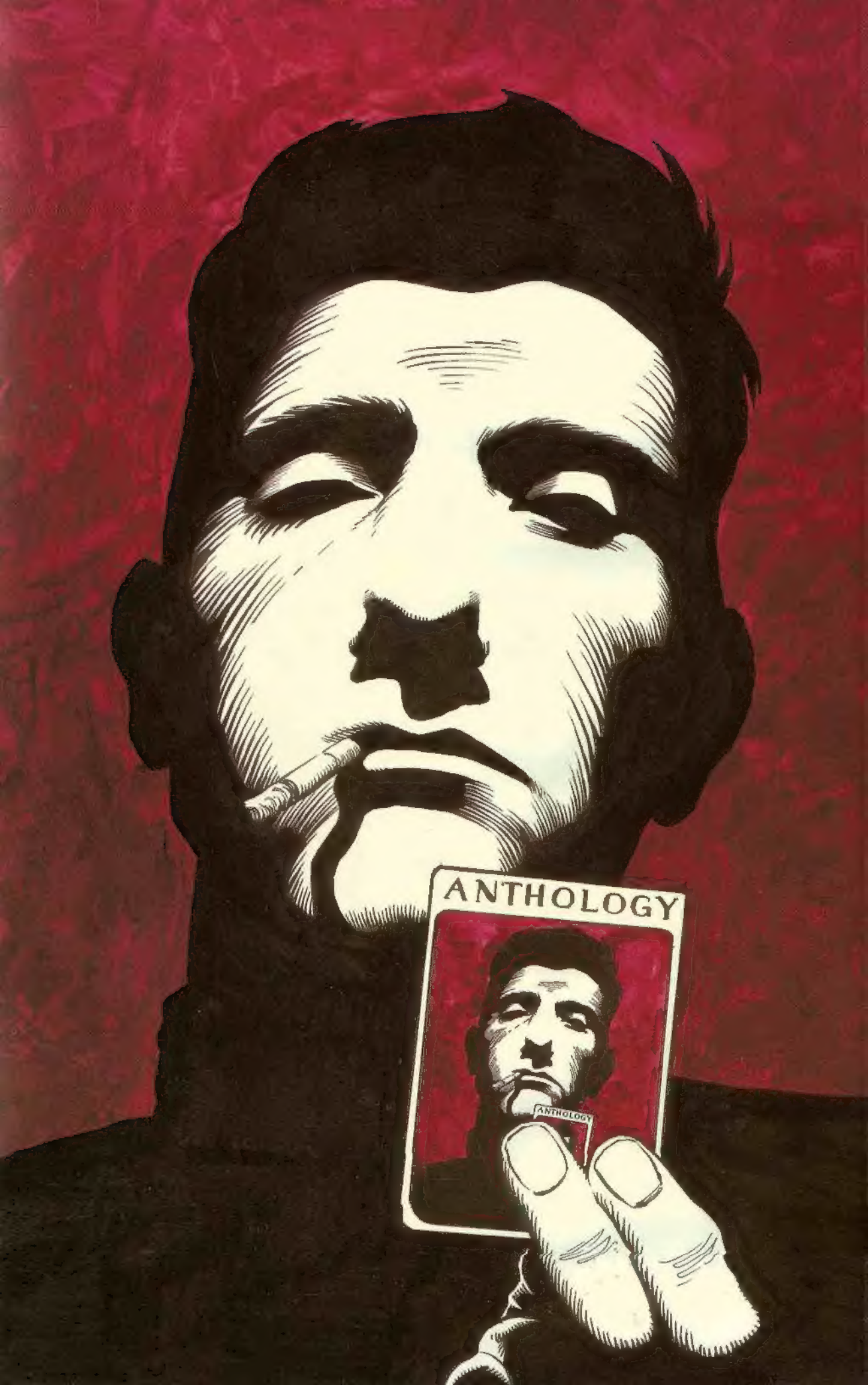
The Caliber Book Club offers its members a unique opportunity to keep up on all their favorite Caliber titles. If you've had it with not being able to consistently get the titles you want, but you just can't see spending the extra moolah for the shipping fees of ordering direct, then this is for you!

Simply call Caliber TOLL FREE and have your Visa or MasterCard ready. You can immediately become a Club member and your credit card will be billed $15 a month...Cancel at any time. Foreign members will be billed a little extra shipping charge, accordingly.

# 1-888-222-6642

Call between 9 am - 5 pm eastern time, Mon.-Fri.

Fine print: The Caliber Book Club is © 1997 of Caliber Comics and includes all of the Caliber titles. This offer is available only to the discerning comic book reader, bedazzled, preferred reader status. Stapleton, and not connected in any way to Caliber Comics. (That means the entire Caliber staff is invited to join the club, their families, their cats, their dogs, and even a few of the trainspotters we've met.


ANTHOLOGY
ANTHOLOGY